Cloudy Sky

A True Tale

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Narcissa Smith Spinger

THE ILLUSTRATED

CLOUDY SKY

OR

THE UNFORTUNATE CHILDREN

A TRUE TALE

NARCISSA SMITH SPRINGER

THE ILLUSTRATED

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OR

THE UNFORTUNATE CHILDREN

A TRUE TALE

WITH THIRTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

35

BY

NARCISSA SMITH SPRINGER

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PREFACE.

DEAR READERS:—If this book should ever reach the eye of the public, know that it is a true tale, with the exception of the names of places and characters, which are fictitious. In writing this book the author desires to show what is transpiring, and has transpired, in this so-called "Free American Continent." When we peruse a novel, we exclaim: "It is only fiction;" but, dear readers, there is no book written but what is founded upon facts. The author has also another object in view to present—for parents to provide suitable clothing, as far as their means will permit, for their children, that they may be able to appear in society without a feeling of repugnance, and so that their companions will not scoff at them. The feelings of a child are much more easily hurt than those who have arrived at an adult age. Even those who are clad in silk often have minds far inferior to those clad in homespun,—the latter in after years have been foremost in our ranks, both gentlemen and ladies, and filled the highest posts of honor. A child can not love a parent when that parent strives to displease the child, with harsh words ever grating on the ear, where words of love would have fallen on the child and beautified its nature as the night dew falls upon the morning glory.

The author has also another object in view and that is, never listen to gossip or the voice of slander

unless you are confident of its truth. Our Heavenly father has not given his children equally strong minds, and he has placed the human family on this earth for trials to be thrown in their pathway, yet some have few trials, some are raised in the lap of luxury, while others are surrounded with thorns. Unkindness to children often leads them from the path of virtue, slanderous tongues often have the same effect. Those who are innocent have been driven the downward road through trouble, where one kind word from a true friend would have been the means of saving them. They feel that their name in this life is blotted forever,—no roses to bloom for them,—while oftentimes they are more innocent than those who tread our streets clad in the light of virtue. People often do things thoughtlessly that are no harm; but there is a class of people who delight in taking it up and making it appear with a dark cloud over it, when that cloud in its very darkest should have a silver lining. If people would just say, we know not the cause that led him or her to do this or that as we never filled their position; we will condemn them not, but leave them to their God to be judged—not us poor mortals so liable to err, who know not the cause and can not judge,—how many graves would be filled with the children of God, where thousands of poor wrecks are laid for the green grass to cover the mounds of those who are ever forgotten by man, but perhaps not by their God — no kind hand to plant a flower on their graves, or no one to say, "I stretched forth my hand and you would not."

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CLEVELAND, OHIO, March 30th, 1884.

Some people that have perused "Cloudy Sky, or the Unfortunate Children," think it is a novel, as it is written in novel style. In the third edition I will inform the reader that it is every word facts, even to the description of the scenery—every character is real. I am aware that many books have been written called a true tale, when they are only founded on facts, for the purpose of selling the work. But in this book I have taken especial pains to add nothing but the facts, except the poetry.

The story is located in Pennsylvania, Virginia, Ohio, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana and Maryland.

The character in the book called Ardeela dropped dead with heart disease the 26th of September, 1883, in the asylum, and was buried from the residence of her sister Elgie, in Grove City, lacking one month of a year from the time this book was published.

NARCISSA SMITH SPRINGER.

THE CLOUDY SKY

CHAPTER I.

ROLLAND COLLENS ENTERS THE ARMY.

East of the Alleghany mountains there lived Raymond Collens, a tiller of the soil, who owned a tract of land situated a few miles from Baltimore. The family consisted of four sons, Charles, James, William, and Rolland, and three daughters, Madge, Agnes, and Violet. Their mother, Marion Collens, had passed over the river of death some four years before the time when this story begins. When the Revolutionary war broke out, Charles, the eldest, volunteered. Rolland, only seventeen, asked his father's permission to enter the army, and, with tears in his eyes, the brave old man said: "I am in poor health, my days are few at best; you are but a boy in age, though a man in size—but go, fight for your country, and though your father may never set his eyes on his noble Rolland again, he will have the satisfaction of knowing that his sons are fighting in a good cause."

Charles had bade them adieu two weeks previous. Rolland, in taking leave of his father and sisters, said: "If I die on the battlefield, know your child died a noble death. If my life is spared Rolland Collens will come home with honors."

"Well spoken, my brave boy. Farewell."

He passed down the lane and was soon gone. At the end of the lane there was a small hill, which obscured the house from view. His sisters watched until his form was out of sight, returning to the cottage to cheer their father, whose eyes were never again to gaze upon his sons. In about three months he was laid side by side with his wife, Marion, to rest till the great resurrection morn.

Rolland's first journey was to Washington's camp. When he put in an appearance, he was asked his age. He promptly replied, "Seventeen." The officer said he was too young, but he would consult General Washington. The General asked to see the boy. Rolland stepped forth in all his young manhood.

"Are you anxious to enter the army?" asked the general.

"I am," he replied.

"You are too young to go as a regular s ' 'ier. Do you think you could be ensign?"

"I think I could fill that position if you would give me a trial."

The general was so pleased with his manly appearance that he at once assigned him the position of which he afterwards proved so worthy. One day after three months service, being tired riding his pony "Cudgeltail," he alighted and took a seat



on a log close by a spring. Picking up a cup that some one had left at the spring he quenched his thirst. As he was returning to his pony, he espied two Englishmen advancing, who summoned him to surrender, which, seeing escape was cut off, he thought best to do. They then rifled him of his documents, and thinking he was but a boy, one of the soldiers returned to their horses to procure some strings to tie Rolland on his pony. While one soldier was absent, Rolland slipped his hand behind him, and drew forth a horse-pistol, forced the other soldier to surrender, tied him on his horse, and placed the documents again in his pockets. When the other soldier returned, Rolland took him prisoner, tying him also, and led them both into the patriot camp. General Washington made Rolland a present of the horses and saddles.

This news reached his father two days previous to his death. He said he knew his Rolland was brave and would fight nobly for his country. His brother Charles fell pierced with an Indian arrow on the battlefield. He was then alone still filling the office of ensign.

As he was riding along on one occasion, carrying important documents from General Washington, he was surprised to see a number of English scouts. He thought of the documents that were entrusted to his care. "I must save them," he said, and with tears in his eyes he bade farewell to Cudgeltail, jumped the fence, and was soon in the thicket. To his surprise, he heard a neigh, and in a few moments Cudgeltail was at his side. In a few hours the enemy fired their guns, which

warned him they had given up the search. The soldier-boy breathed a sigh of relief, and kneeling down, thanked God for his deliverance. He did not dare venture from his hiding-place before the rising of the sun. Such a night as he passed! A dark storm arose. Lightning flashed, and the thunder rolled, while he and his noble horse lay side by side. The rain poured in torrents, and occasionally he would hear the howl of the wolf in the distance, when the storm began to abate, which added greatly to his discomfort. Morning found them cold, wet, and hungry. They emerged from their hiding-place, and went a short distance, when they perceived a log cabin. Riding up to a lady standing in the yard, he asked: "Friend or foe?" to which she replied, "Friend." She gave him a warm breakfast, and he stood before the fire until his clothing was dried, while Cudgeltail was amply fed. He then bade his hostess adieu with many thanks, and the soldier-boy went safely into camp.

Through his honesty he rose to the rank of colonel. On the battlefield of Brandywine his brave comrades were falling around him, and his only hope was to fall from his horse as if dead. He had scarcely fallen when a ball pierced the heart of his brave Cudgeltail, whose lifeless form fell at Rolland's feet. Two English soldiers rode up and thrust a bayonet in his thigh, but he never moved, knowing his life depended on it. As soon as the enemy was out of sight, Rolland drew his handkerchief from his pocket, and some wool, staunched the blood, and bound the wound. Weak

from the loss of blood, he crawled on hands and knees two miles to where he knew there was a cabin, but did not know whether they were friends or foes. It happened that the wife proved a friend, the husband a foe. She gave him a substantial meal, dressed his wound, then informed him she must secret him before the return of her husband. She placed milk and food under a pile of flax in an old hovel and conducted Rolland there. The husband returned and asked if any of the enemy had passed that way, but she replied not that she knew of. For ten days he remained a prisoner under the flax; the good woman taking him provisions and dressing his wound whenever opportunity offered. The second day some British passed by, and one of them shoved his bayonet through the logs into the flax, exclaiming:

"I will fetch the enemy out of there if there are any taking a rest."

This he did merely for pastime, little thinking a soldier lay trembling from head to foot, as at times the bayonet was within an inch of Rolland's body. As soon as Mrs. Graham was satisfied that the field was clear, she engaged two friends with horses to take Rolland to his friends. Supplied by her with provisions, they arrived at nightfall, and assisting the brave soldier to mount one of the horses, they conducted him safely to his regiment, traveling mostly at night. In bidding Mrs. Graham farewell, with tears in his eyes, he said:

"You have 'cast your bread upon the waters,' may you receive it after many days. Farewell."

The war came to a close shortly after that, and

American independence was declared. His brother Charles left a widow and two daughters, who, after a few years, were placed in good circumstances financially by a large fortune bequeathed them by an uncle. They moved west of the Alleghany mountains and settled in a town called Washington.

CHAPTER II.

MADGE'S MISFORTUNE.

Madge Collens married Mr. Anderson, an English colonel, and lived very happily until a letter arrived, during her husband's absence from home. Thinking perhaps it was a matter of business, and that it might be necessary to forward to him, she broke the seal. Judge her feelings when she found that it was from his wife in England, begging him to return. That was the last poor Madge knew for days. When Colonel Anderson arrived he found her whom he most fondly loved not able to lisp his name. He asked the cause of the kind neighbor who was her constant attendant. She replied:

"I know not. I found her in an unconscious state with a letter in her hand."

He asked for the letter and it was given him In a moment he knew all. She slowly recovered from the shock, under his kind care. He begged her to remain with him, saying he would never return to his former wife; but Madge could not be

mistress (as she considered herself) of the man she worshipped. She bade him farewell, and never heard of him afterward. Soon afterward she died of a broken heart, and was laid to rest in the quiet graveyard in a village near Baltimore.

This was Rolland's favorite sister. Sad and disheartened over his sister's fate, he concluded to embark in the mercantile business, thinking it would relieve his mind, in which he succeeded. He always had an inclination to study law, however, and finally took up the study in the moments he could spare from his business. He had a cousin, Josephine, that concluded to accompany him in his studies of law; not that she ever thought of practicing, but merely to understand the laws of her country. These two hearts blended into one, which in time proved very unfortunate. They were married, and lived very happily together. But their off-spring, eight in number, had a lack of intellect, with the exception of one son. Rolland had given up the mercantile business, and practiced law for some years with great success, when Josephine, his accomplished wife, died. With a sad heart he looked upon the grave of his Josephine for the last time, turned his steps west of the Alleghanies with his motherless family, and located at Indian Cove. Chloe, his colored servant, superintended the household as best she could, but of this he soon became dissatisfied.

CHAPTER III.

THE WREN FAMILY LEAVE SCOTLAND.

In the city of Glasgow, Scotland, lived a gentleman by the name of William Wren. Being quite wealthy, but desiring to leave the home of his childhood, he made up his mind to cross the briny ocean, and find a home on the beautiful continent of North America, where the wild deer and Indian roved at will. His wife and seven children were notified of his determination and were pleased at the thought of so great an adventure. Disposing of his property for gold and silver coin they were soon on the journey. When midway on the ocean, that terrible scourge, small-pox, visited the ship, and all of his family save himself and one daughter fell victims. One by one they watched them placed in a watery grave with the rolling of the waves for their only requiem. Soon after this terrible trial, another one approached. As evening closed in on the 14th of June, 1796, the sun was setting in the western horizon, to all appearances as calm as usual; but presently a small cloud could be seen in the distance, creeping slowly higher and higher, widening and deepening as it came. Mr. Wren with his only child Kate, a beautiful girl of twenty summers, was sitting on the deck, watching the waves rolling, and thinking of the loved ones that were sleeping cold in death beneath them. It looked like a mockery. All at once, the sky darkened; the the lightning flashed, the thunder rolled, and the

ship began to toss as the wind increased in fury. The brave captain of the Garland said to the passengers:

"Be calm. We must throw overboard as much of the cargo as we can spare to save the ship. If we lighten the burden all may yet be saved; that is our only hope."

He spoke calmly so as not to excite the passengers. The storm was on the increase, and the Garland was riding waves mountain high; every moment it seemed as if the ship would be overwhelmed. Accidentally Mr. Wren's money was thrown into the angry deep. Morning dawned once more upon them, the storm had at last spent its fury, and all was safe; but Mr. Wren found that he and his daughter would have to face the New World penniless. He exclaimed, "Oh, why did we not fall victims with our loved ones and share a watery grave?"

They were landed safely on the American shore August 31, 1796, homeless, penniless, and wanderers. Mr. Wren soon found employment as a clerk in a dry goods establishment in Indian Cove, and Kate found a situation as housekeeper in a small family. Her father engaged board with the family in which she was employed, thereby enabling them to spend many happy hours together.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MARRIAGE OF KATE WREN.

Now to return to Mr. Collens. As a matter of course Chloe did her best; but the care of the

family was too much for her, as they did not feel like obeying their slave. Clara, the second child, fell into the fire and nearly burned to death, but her life was spared, though her face was disfigured.

Mr. Collens had noticed that Kate Wren was a beautiful girl, and hearing of their great misfortune in crossing the ocean, he made up his mind to seek an introduction to the father and daughter. This he accomplished and was most cordially received by both. He asked to call on Miss Kate on the Thursday afternoon following, receiving from Miss Kate an answer in the affirmative.

He put in his appearance at the appointed time, and found Miss Wren a lady possessed of all the finer qualities, good sense, and a very affable and pleasant disposition. He explained his situation, and informed her that he did not love her, but respected her, and could give her a rich home. In return he would require her to be kind to his children, and, as far as was in her power, be a mother to them. If she would consent to this, he would make her his wife. He did not ask her to love him, as he had none to give in return. She took two weeks in which to consider the proposition. He bade her good night and departed She conferred with her father in the meantime; he advised her to accept the offer. When Mr. Collens called she said:

"I will marry you on the same terms of respect and will fulfil the duties of a wife and mother as

far as it is possible, and through kindness on both sides it may yet result in love."

Dressed in a black crape dress, with no ornaments, accompanied by Mr. Collens and her father, Miss Wren repaired to the office of a justice of the peace, on the following Monday evening, who pronounced them man and wife. They preferred having the marriage ceremony solemnized by a justice rather than by a minister for two reasons: first, Kate Wren was a Quakeress; and second, Mr. Collens, though once a Presbyterian, was now a professed Deist.

The cause of the change in his views was this: When a poor man, he and an uncle of his were deputized to remove a family from the premises they occupied. The parties were duly notified a month previous, but would not comply with the law, making it necessary to force their evacuation. The matter was taken into the church. Mr. Collens was excommunicated, while the name of his uncle, Mr. Maynard, was not mentioned in connection with the affair. Mr. Collens was poor and his uncle was wealthy. He became embittered, and from that time on he read Voltaire's and Paine's works until he denounced the Christian religion, and lost his faith in all the doctrines of the church except the existence of a God.

Mrs. Collens assumed the duties of a wife and mother, assisted by their slaves Dedo and Chloe. Mr. Collens had freed all of his slaves but these two, who were man and wife and begged their master to keep them. He, however, made out the necessary papers to set them free in case of

his death, allowing them one thousand dollars each at the time of their freedom.

Mr. Collens at one time went down the beautiful Nuna river on business, and there he learned of a Mrs. Graham who was in very destitute circumstances. The thought struck him, might not this be his old friend who hid him in the flax? He called at once, and to his astonishment found that it was indeed the true friend who assisted him in his escape from the British years before. He at once made up his mind to repay a partial share of the kindness which this now destitute woman had bestowed upon him in the hour of trouble, by purchasing the house in which she was living and deeding it to her. He also procured her some furniture, and after seeing her comfortably situated in household goods he put two hundred dollars in her hand, saying:

"You cast your bread upon the waters, and after many days it has returned."

He bade her farewell, happy in the thought that he had been able to assist the woman who had so nobly befriended him.

At the expiration of a year, Mrs. Collens was a mother in the truest sense of the word. A daughter was born, and they named it Ada. This made no difference in her kindness to her stepchildren. She seemed to pity them more, as the intellect of her own child apparently bade fair to be far superior to theirs. She wept sadly when her stepson, twenty-two years of age, who had been away from home for a few days, undertook upon his return to tell his father what transpired

on his journey. The young man came into the house one day saying:

"Father, there was a man in Vermont who was shot through the heart, and ran two miles afterward."

"Stop! stop! my son."

"It is true, for General Bird said so.

Mr. Collens arose and with tears in his eyes walked away, saying:

"See the effect of marrying cousins."

CHAPTER V.

THE BIRTH OF JULIA COLLENS.

The fourth year after Mr. Collens' second marriage, a second daughter was born. They named her Julia. She was very delicate, with the promise of a life as short as the fragile summer flower.

Rolland Collens, Esq., concluded to leave Indian Cove, and settle on a farm in the county of Allen, about five miles from the county seat. This he did for the sake of his sons. He continued the practice of law, and was elected associate judge, which office he held twenty-two years. He was a wise man and beloved by all who knew him. Many gentlemen of business desiring to visit that part of the country brought letters of introduction to him, affording his family the advantages of good society.

Judge Collens had the medical advice of several

physicians in regard to Julia, and they decided that her removal to some Southern State was the only hope for her recovery. She was a very great pet with her father, and was indeed his perfect image. He sold part of his land, intending to go South in a few weeks, taking with them Chloe as a nurse for Julia, and to remain one year; but Providence ruled otherwise. Mrs. Collens was taken very ill with a fever, hovering between life and death for several weeks, and by the time she became convalescent, Julia seemed to be improving. The trip was then given up, and a daily ride in a gig was recommended. Every pleasant day Dedo, accompanied by his mistress, took Julia to ride.

In that part of the country wolves were to be seen in numbers, and children having occasion to journey alone went on horseback, as the only safe way. William and James Collens were engaged in making maple-sugar, on a small island, some three miles from home. One day, while riding leisurely along, with the invalid and her mother, Dedo espied a number of wolves in the distance, following them. Not knowing that, whether they went fast or slow, the wolves would imitate them, they started the horses on a trot; but the wolves only gained on them. Mrs. Collens thought of some assafetida she had in her basket, and, knowing that wolves were very fond of it, she gave it to Dedo, told him to place it upon a stump. This he did, and they drove rapidly on. By this time, the wolves had arrived at the stump, and stopped to snuff the assafetida. But a quarter of a mile more, and they would reach the camp,

where her stepson's sons were making sugar. She ordered Dedo to unhitch the horse as quickly as possible, which he did, placing her, trembling with weakness and fright, upon it. She rode with all speed through the forest, over hill and dale, while Dedo, with Julia in his arms, followed her as closely as he could. The wolves did not remain long at the stump, but starting after them with renewed energy, gained upon them with such rapidity, that when within a few rods of the boys, the wolves were almost at their heels. Mrs. Collens screamed, "Wolves?" and, fainting, fell from her horse. Poor Dedo, frightened almost to death, threw Julia upon a pile of leaves, which saved her from injury. The boys, as soon as they saw the new-comers, seized their axes, and, with the aid of dogs and gun, drove the wolves into the forest. They then returned to their mother, and bathed her temples in cold water. Within an hour she began to revive, but poor Dedo lay trembling, and screaming that the "wolves would get him yet." William took the horse and gun, and went for the gig, placed his mother and Julia in it, and took them safely home. Dedo remained with James in camp, and often afterwards laughed and chuckled at the way he scared de wolves; but was very careful to see that his mistress was out of sight. Mrs. Collens recovered from her fright, Julia continued to improve, and was pronounced quite healthful, though rather delicate when compared with her sister. As time wore on, the Collens family increased in numbers.

CHAPTER VI.

JUDGE COLLENS AMONG THE INDIANS.

After a time Judge Collens made up his mind to take a trip among the Indians, and do some surveying for the Government. He made application and received his commission. He decided to be absent about three months, and was not long in making the necessary preparations.

In every camp he visited he was addressed as "Tatawishta," or the "Morning Star;" and while journeying through the country he ate many a hoe-cake carefully baked by the old corn-planter's wife. When his three months had expired he returned to his family, tired and worn out; but he had gained a great deal of knowledge in regard to the habits and disposition of the Indian, and found that like all others of the human family, the heart of the Indian could be touched by kindness much more readily than by force. He always carried a pipe with him to smoke when he entered a wigwam. His custom was to light it and offer it to the chief as a calumet of peace, and it was always accepted. By presenting the squaws with trinkets he won their confidence, and made them ever ready to assist him in every possible way, and always anxious to have him accept venison in return for what he gave them. Journeying through the country naturally exposed him, more or less, to the inclemencies of the weather, and brought a return of the rheumatism, a disease with which he had, some years before, been afflicted. This pre-

vented him from ever again surveying the forests, or from wrapping himself in his blanket, with nothing but the moon and stars shining above him for a shelter, and laying him down to court "tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep."

CHAPTER VII.

DR. W. LEMON—THE STRANGER.

Julia grew to be a lovely young lady of superior intellect, the idol of her father, but hated by her mother, for she was jealous of her own child. The only kindness she was ever known to show to poor Julia was when she was sick; giving her at that time her undivided attention. When Julia was seventeen years of age there was a gentleman called at the Judge's residence and handed him a letter. After noting the contents he invited him to enter, receiving him in a most cordial manner. He then introduced his wife to Dr. W. Lemon, of Baltimore; at the same time introducing his two daughters by his last wife. The Doctor bowed and the the young ladies returned the salutation. He soon made known his business west of the Alleghany mountains. He had been sent by the Governor to vaccinate, in order to prevent the loathesome disease, small-pox. Julia Collens was the first person who had been vaccinated west of the Alleghanies. Dr. Lemon fell a victim to her charms, but instead of making known to her his affection for her, he went to her father and boldly

told the story of the love he had for his daughter, asking, at the same time, his consent to their marriage, which was indeed readily given. He then informed Julia of his love for her, without letting her know that he had already obtained the consent of her father to their marriage, and asked her to become his wife. He told her that if she consented to do so he would send her to his parents in Baltimore, with a letter of introduction, and while there she could attend school during his absence, and when he returned he would claim her as his bride. Julia returned his love, but could not think of going alone so far from home without him to accompany her, nor did she think her father would give his consent. As a matter of course she thought her father was ignorant of the Doctor's preference for her. She declined his offer with a sad heart, however. He then took a ring from his finger, and, placing it on her hand, he said:

"Wear this for me; no other girl will I ever wed."

He bade them all good bye, and went aboard the boat, which was to leave for New Orleans. After he was gone, the Judge asked Julia when she and the Doctor were going to be married. She looked at him with so much astonishment depicted in her sad countenance, that her father did not know what to make of it. He then endeavored to explain to her the way in which the Doctor had come to him with his story of his love, and asked his consent to their marriage, which he had granted. It was now Julia's turn

surprise her father, by telling him that the Doctor had asked her to marry him, without informing her that her father had given his consent to the marriage. Julia felt very sorry, for had she known her father would have been pleased at her acceptance of the Doctor's proposal, she never would have refused it. But it was over, and she had to make the best of it.

She learned, some time after the Doctor had gone, that the boat upon which he had taken passage, stopped at a town along the river for fifteen days, and that there Dr. Lemon had found an old friend, who was well acquainted with Judge Collens' family. He told the story of his love for Julia to his friend, Maggie Rivers. She urged him to retrace his steps, and agreed to accompany him, feeling confident that she could secure for him the prize he so much coveted. The Doctor consented, but as there were no returning boats, they were obliged to secure horses, and return by roadway. The horses were saddled and ready to start, when a colored messenger boy was sent to inform the Doctor that the captain of the Orange had concluded to continue the journey, and start at once. This order obliged the Doctor to postpone a return to the homestead of Judge Collens. Being an employe of the Government, the Doctor was obliged to attend strictly to the duties assigned him. That was the last she ever heard of him.

Mrs. Collens loved best her oldest daughter. Ada was a blonde, and Julia a brunette. Gentlemen of profession fancied Julia, while mechanics and farmers had a preference for Ada.

William Young, editor of the Plain Statesman, called to see Julia, but she had not been long seated in the parlor, when Dedo stepped to the door, and informed "Missy Julia," that her mother wished to see her. She instantly obeyed, and her mother commanded her to go at once, and stop up the holes in the fence to prevent the geese from coming through, at the same time sending Ada to entertain Mr. Young. Julia stepped to the door, and informed him of her orders. He at once arose and said he would accompany her, turning to Miss Ada and excusing himself. He walked leisurely out with Julia to assist her in her work. Dedo chuckled, and said:

"Missy Collens was not sharp enough for dem dat time."

Dedo loved Julia and almost hated her mother for her unkindness to her child. Dedo and Chloe had a nice room to themselves, with a large fireplace, where the hickory logs crackled and burnt with a blaze which made the room cheerful during the dark and stormy days of winter. On a day late in autumn when Dedo had just taken the last log to his room for the evening fuel, he overheard Mrs. Collens command Julia to retire at 6 o'clock. He slipped around to where Julia was, and told her to obey her mother, that he would have a good fire in Chloe's parlor, where she and "Massa Young could enjoy de crackin' ob de hickory as it would loominate up de chimna," that he would "take Massa Young dere all right." Chloe's parlor was next to Julia's sleeping apartment on

one side and Mr. Young's on the other, with a door leading to each.

Ada was glad to assist her sister in anything; so she had nothing to fear from her. Dedo in the meantime had managed to inform "Massa Young" of the proposed plan. Julia retired as commanded, her mother seeing her safely in bed, and bidding her goodnight as she left the room. Ada feigned headache and retired also. Mr. Young was entertained by the Judge until 8 o'clock. Feeling rather wearied he excused himself, expressing a wish to retire. The Judge remarked that traveling was hard work. Mr. Young inquired for the young ladies, saying he would like to bid them good-night. Mrs. Collens was busy reading, and asked him to excuse her for not saying good-night for the girls, as they had wished her to do, "Ada had a very bad headache, and Julia was in delicate health, so both had retired earlier than usual." The Judge told him he would be obliged to find his way to the sleeping apartment assigned to him by going up the stairway on the outside of the Hamlet.

He bade Mrs. Collens good-night, and sauntered out into the open air. The first thing the Judge noticed was Dedo lying under a maple tree close by the Hamlet. "Holloa, Dedo, what are you doing there?" asked the Judge.

"Ruminatin' on de stars, massa."

"Get up and show this gentleman to his sleeping apartment, and ruminate yourself to bed," said the Judge blandly, and bidding Mr. Young good-night, he entered the house.

Meanwhile Chloe had rolled out the old settee in front of the fire, and had a nice plate of apples on the stand, when Julia, dressed in pink crepe, walked in and took a seat. The candle was burning brightly on the mantel, and cast its rays of light upon the dew drops which shone in her hair till they sparkled like those of nature in the rays of the morning sun. Slowly the opposite door opened and in came Mr. Young. Dedo, grinning and showing his white teeth, said: "I got him up de stairs all right, Missy Julia. You can t'ank dis chile fer ruminatin'," and with a broad grin on his face, he said good-night.

The evening passed quite pleasantly. Mr. Young, in the course of their evening conversation, told Julia in a frank manner that he had unwisely engaged himself to a young lady whom he since found he did not love, but for the sake of honor he was bound to marry. He asked Julia to be his friend and sister; unless death should release him from his engagement, in which case he would want to claim Miss Julia for his own. She acquiesced in the former, but to the latter she would not consent. She said she would let time decide the future. At twelve o'clock they withdrew to their apartments and each retired, with the thought that neither could tell what mysteries the future might unfold to them.

In the morning Mrs. Collens asked Mr. Young how he rested. "Nicely," he replied. She said Julia was not feeling well, and was never in good health, while her sister Ada was a very healthy, robust girl, and would make a good wife for any

man, professional or otherwise; that Julia was not fit for a wife; she was nothing but a delicate flower. Mr. Young smiled while Ada blushed, for she could not bear to hear her mother mention her name in connection with young gentlemen, especially when gentlemen were present. She very abrubtly said:

"Mother, never mind me; I will look out for myself, and like the birds, I will choose my own mate."

Chloe chanced to hear the last remark of Ada's and being somewhat ruffled in temper said, "You're right, honey. Missy Collens is too obstreperous on you and Missy Julia. If I were you I'd lubricate; so now, honey."

Mrs. Collens called out: "Go to your work, Chloe, and attend to your own affairs."

Dedo put in his appearance and said, "Missy Collens, jis take a little ob dat 'vice to yourself, and see how it digests."

Upon this his mistress took up the broom and ordered him away, and as he did not go soon enough to suit her, she sent Zeno to call the Judge from his library. The Judge came, and Mrs. Collens told him of Dedo's impudence.

"Dedo, you black rascal," said the Judge, "you attend to your own affairs, and go along about your own business." He smiled as he said it, for he well knew his wife was in the wrong, yet he did not want to encourage Dedo in his impudence to his mistress.

Mr. Young was highly pleased with his visit, and remained until after dinner, when he asked

for his horse, bade them all a kind farewell, and set out for the city.

CHAPTER VIII.

JULIA'S ILLNESS AND MRS. COLLENS' REMORSE.

A heavy rain fell that night, and the grass was very wet. During the night the wind had blown down the barnyard fence, and the cattle had taken their departure to the meadow. Mrs. Collens, upon seeing this, ordered Julia to go after them in her bare feet. She remonstrated with her, and said: "I am gaining my health, and if I do as you command, it may be the cause of my death, or a life of suffering."

"Go immediately, I command you; I mean to harden you so as not to have a mushroom of you any longer," replied her mother.

Julia obeyed. That night they anxiously watched beside her bed as she raged with a fever, and begged her father not to let her mother touch her, and screaming: "She will kill me! She will kill me! Take her away! Take her away!" The doctor would not allow her mother to be in the room, as it agitated the poor girl. The Judge clung fondly to his idol, and could not understand what this meant. Julia would throw her arms wildly about her father's neck, and say: "Save me from that woman called my mother."

It was a plain case of brain fever. Dr. Warnock carefully watched every symptom of the dis-



ease, retiring at intervals to obtain the rest he so much needed, then returning to his post of duty, while her father took a short nap. She was a great favorite with the doctor. All attendants stepped lightly through the room, each being anxious to hear the doctor say: "The crisis is past; she will live.' Dedo and Chloe were ever on the watch, offering their willing hands to do anything they could for poor Julia.

But where was Julia's mother? 'Tis soon told; she was pacing her room with that remorse of conscience in which the sting alone is the best atonement of the guilty heart. Eagerly she listened for the doctor's footfall at the door, to tell her that her child was saved. But many hours she had to wait, and the Judge, anxious to know the cause of Julia's sickness, of which his wife would not inform him, was soon to learn it all. The arrow of guilt had sunken deep into her heart. Her remorse of conscience was driving her to despair, and she, at last, unable longer to hide the sorrow of her heart, entered the room slowly, and silently kneeling beside the bed, she said:

"Julia, forgive me; forgive your wretched mother; I can bear it no longer."

But Julia made no reply. Unconscious she lay while the night winds answered: "I hear you not." The wretched woman fell at her husband's feet and told him all. That night at 12 o'clock the crisis was past, and Julia was again restored to consciousness. It was a happy moment to her parents and sister. Ada now took a seat beside her sister to watch until morning, with Chloe for

company, so at her father and the doctor could retire, as they were greatly in want of sleep and rest.

The Doctor forbade Mrs. Collens seeing Julia, until she should become stronger, which was many days. Julia, however, did not ask for her mother, which, of course, made her feel more deeply the wrong she had done her child. After she had regained her strength sufficiently to sit up, her mother came into the room and said: "Good morning, Julia; how do you feel this morning?"

"Mother, I feel like a mushroom yet," was her reply.

Mrs. Collens changed color, but made no reply, for well she knew she was deserving of the answer. This opened the Judge's eyes, for he could see that Mrs. Collens was jealous of her own child. As soon as Julia was well enough to do light work, her mother told her to tambour some lace caps, and she would take them to the city and sell them for her. Judge Collens was a man of wealth, but having nineteen children—eight by his first wife and eleven by his second—to care for and educate, required a great deal of money. So every one had to be industrious. Julia worked hard and finished half a dozen caps. Her mother took them to the city of P—— and sold them at a high price, and bought Julia two pairs of hose at fifty cents a pair. The balance of the money she spent for Ada and the two step-daughters. She returned home, gave Julia the hose, and told her that the other girls were older than she and deserved more. Julia could not endure this, so she

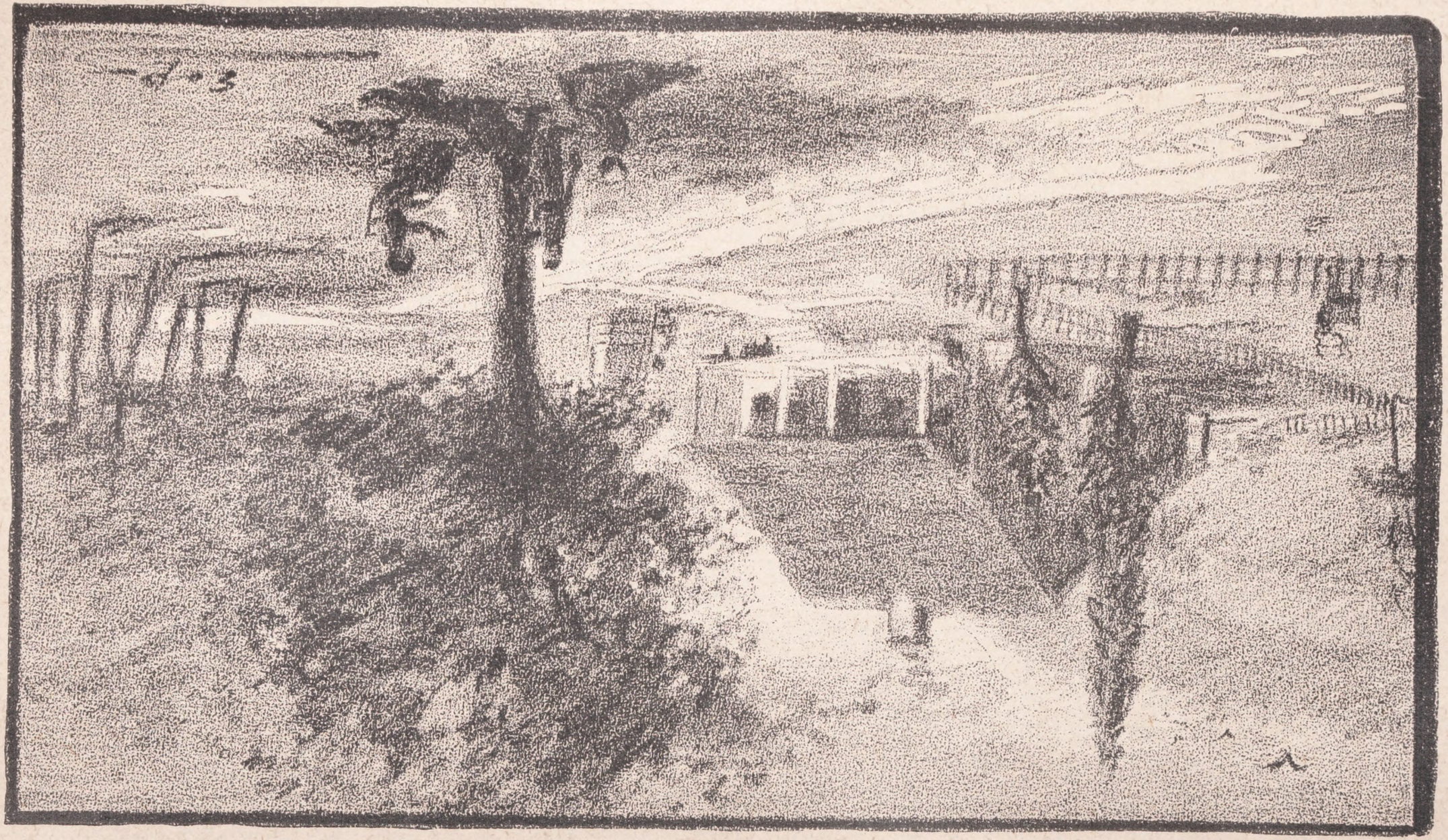
told her father of her treatment. He said, "Pap's Julia should not mind, that he would make it up to her some day."

One day she went to get her hose, but they were missing. She asked her mother about them, and her answer to her was, that she "knew nothing about them." Sad and disheartened she left the house, and the thought of a poor family upon whom she had intended calling, coming to mind, she concluded to call at once. Upon entering, what was her surprise, on looking round, to see her hose lying upon an old chest. She remarked that they were very nice, and asked how much they cost. They then told her that her mother had given the hose to them. "Well, they are mine, and I want them," said Julia, and they willingly gave them up. Julia returned home with the hose, and her mother told her that if she would not tell her father, she would give her five dollars in money. Julia accepted the money for she knew it was just. She never let her mother do any more trading for her, however.

The doctor advised her to be out in the sun as much as possible; so her father bought a flock of sheep, and as the wolves were very plenty, he placed her as a shepherdess with her brother Zeno, a little boy of ten summers, accompanied by their dog, Mosque, to watch over them, and help them to keep the sheep in safety. The sheep soon learned to come and go at Julia's bidding. She loved wild flowers, so she and Zeno would gather them in the valleys and on the hilltops during the day when the sheep were pasturing. As the night

drew near, the wolves would begin their howl in the distance; then Mosque would growl, and Julia knew it was time to gather her flock together, and start for home. She would take a winding course around the hills with Zeno, the sheep following her closely, and Mosque driving up the tardy ones. She frequently met her father in the meadow, and one day he exclaimed when he met her: "I am so glad you have come, I have been very anxious about you all day, my little shepherdess; pap's Julia need not go out any more to watch the sheep. In the future you shall have the benefit of the sun without becoming so much endangered. I have a new occupation in which I wish you to engage; and that is, I want you to take charge of 'all the world,' and be my banker." "All the world" was the term he generally used to designate his pocket-book, and he concluded his remarks by saying: "When your mother has charge of it, I find it leaks very much faster than I wish it to."

It was well that he did not send Julia with the sheep again, for the next morning he told the children to turn the sheep out alone for a few hours, and he would go after them. Early in the day he and Zeno set out on their journey to bring the sheep home for the night. They had not penetrated the woods more than a few rods, when to their astonishment they found eight of the flock dead, with wool scattered all around, and a little distance from them lay poor Mosque almost lifeless with a dead wolf's paw close to his mouth. Zeno screamed, "My dog is dead! My poor Mosque is dead," at the same time placing the



dog's head in his lap. His father told him not to cry, that possibly they might save him yet. The dog being accustomed to following the sheep, had gone with them alone that morning; and when the wolves made the attack upon the sheep, poor Mosque fought nobly to save them, and, like the true hero, fell at his post. Zeno asked his father whether Mosque would go to heaven if he died. This was rather a perplexing question for the Judge, and not knowing how to answer him, he said, "You will have to ask Julia. I think she has been your teacher."

They found a thick piece of bark to which they tied a stout cord, and put poor Mosque upon it. Making a pillow of moss, they drew the dog home. Julia bound up his wounds, and by careful nursing he was restored to his former health and usefulness.

CHAPTER IX.

JULIA INSTRUCTS DEDO, CHLOE, AND ZENO FROM THE BIBLE.

It became a regular custom for Julia to take Dedo, Chloe, and Zeno out into the field, where there was a large maple tree, with her Bible (as her father had asked her not to read it in his presence), and read passages of Scripture to them. She taught them to read, and to love their Savior, Jesus Christ. She told them of Heaven, the place of happiness for the blessed, and of hell, the

place of punishment for the wicked, and told them that they must keep the commandments as far as it was in their power to do, that they must have faith to believe that Jesus would intercede with God, the Father of all, for them. Christ died as an atonement for our sins, and Julia wanted them to do what God's word commanded all who were followers of his to do. She was teaching them to live a righteous life, and become examples to the eye of the outer world, of what the children of God should be. Zeno asked Julia where heaven was. She told him it was above the sky, and that hell was beneath the earth. He replied:

"Well then, that wolf went to hell for killing our sheep, and hurting Mosque."

She endeavored to explain to him the difference between mankind and the brute creation. The Scriptures say the soul of the beast goes downward at death, but the soul of man goes upward; the spirit returns to God, who gave it, and the body returns to dust. At the last day, when the world is destroyed, when the earth and sea give up their dead, the spirit and body are re-united, and God passes judgment upon it according to the life the living soul on earth had chosen to live. "He who is accepted as one of my children shall sit on the right hand of our Father in heaven." But if our life has been one of evil, it shall be cast into hell. Dedo and Chloe sat with their mouths wide open. "Dat scare me, Chloe. I not tell Massa Judge I's ruminatin' anoder night. I'll fix tings so Massa Young can find Missy Julia widout my 'sistance. Neber you mind, Chloe, you can

sit in de doorway and pint wid your finger," said Dedo.

Chloe replied, "I can do better dan dat, Dedo; I jis whisper in Massa Young's ear dat dere is a good fire in Chloe's parlor, and dat Missy Julia sits dere dis ebenin'."

Mr. Young did not put in his appearance, but Dr. Demit did. Julia went immediately to her father, and told him how she was situated—that her mother was determined that she should not keep company with the Doctor. Her father told her he would arrange matters for her so that she could have the pleasure of the Doctor's company. He said he would engage in conversation with the Doctor for a time, play a game of euchre, and then she should have the Doctor for her company the balance of the evening. Zeno was seated on a stool, the family all being in the room, conversing upon the different diseases which human flesh is heir to, when the Judge said he thought rheumatism was hell. Up jumped Zeno, and said, "Papa, either you or Julia lies, for she says hell is beneath the earth, and is a place of punishment. You say rheumatism is hell."

"Stop! stop! my son, you must not speak so."

He felt that he could give no reply, so he said, "Let us play a game of euchre."

Mrs. Collens brought the deck of cards, and asked the Doctor to be her partner. He consented, while Julia was partner of her father. They played until nine o'clock, when the Judge said, "I presume, Doctor, that you came to spend the evening with my daughter Julia."

"I did!" he replied.

"Mrs. Collens and I will retire at once. It is time, Ada, that you and the rest of the family were in bed," said the Judge.

Chloe heard what the Judge said, and it was not long before she and Dedo were in their quarters.

The next morning Mrs. Collens was very angry, because Julia had outwitted her. When she asked the Judge for money he told her to go to Julia, as she was now his banker, and would keep his accounts in the future. She emphatically told her husband she would never go to Julia for it. He then told her she would have to do without. She said if he would give the bank account and money into Ada's hands she would be satisfied; but he did not agree with her. She then went to Julia, and told her she thought it had come to a fine pass when she could step so boldly between her own father and mother. Julia denied the charge as a total falsehood. It was her father's request that she should take charge of the money affairs of the household, his object in so doing being to ascertain how much money was used by his family during the year. He was under the impression that the amount of money he furnished his family, was spent very fast, and without any particular benefit, as he could see, being derived from it. Ada and Julia knew where the money went, but did not dare to tell their father. Mrs. Collens could hire Ada not to tell, but Julia could not be hired, and was in possession of too much principle to speak to her father in regard to what she knew to be truth. Mrs. Collens' parents were wealthy

in Scotland, and kept all kinds of liquors in their house, and, being accustomed to its daily use in the home of her childhood, she acquired the habit of using strong drink. She would ask the Judge if he would not like a bowl of toddy, of which she knew he was very fond. He generally accepted her invitation, and she could, by this means, keep her husband from detecting the smell of liquor on her breath. Julia would find bottles of liquor where her mother had secreted them, and, taking them from their hiding places, would dash them to pieces; while Ada would assist the mother in getting them, because she knew that by so doing she could get a new dress or bonnet. While under the influence of drink, Mrs. Collens would give a great deal of money, as well as clothing and provisions, to the poor in their vicinity. She was therefore called one of the noblest ladies in the country, on account of her benevolence. Julia often thought she would tell her father of the discovery she had made in the habits of her mother, but would as often change her mind.

Ada engaged herself to a young farmer, by the name of Loren Willson, when she was yet but twelve years of age. This pleased her mother, for his parents were slaveholders in Virginia. Ada was quite large for her age, and readily passed for sixteen anywhere. They had been engaged for five years, when Ada announced the fact. Her father was also well pleased, for Loren Willson was the son of his most intimate friend. Loren was ever ready to take her to all entertainments and dances, as she was lighthearted and gay, and

let every day take care of itself. Fine clothes and plenty of amusement were what she lived on. She would oftentimes say to Julia: "You may take the man that administers to the sick, and makes up pills and powders, and I will take the one that shakes his heels, and drives the slave."

Julia replied: "You are too lighthearted. I love to dance, and think it is a pleasant amusement, as well as a healthy one, but I do not like to carry it to excess. I prefer to improve my mind; and you would do well to follow my example in this respect. Dance part of the time, and devote a part to reading. In that way you could prepare yourself for any position in society."

Ada replied: "I would rather skip and romp than to be tied to pill-bags, as you are. I may as well say that, for it is 'sour grapes' with me, anyhow," and, so saying, she left the room

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CHAPTER X.

CHLOE AND DEDO'S DEATH AND ADA'S MARRIAGE.

Zeno soon came into the room saying Chloe was sick, and wanted to see Julia. She went at once to Chloe's room, but did not find her there. She called Zeno, who told her that she was in the summer house. Julia hastened her footsteps, and was soon at the summer house, where she found Chloe ill, with a terrible attack of cholera morbus. Julia immediately called Dedo and her half-broth-

ers, who came and carried her to her room, little knowing that she would never again leave it until taken to her last resting place. She lived but three days, during which time Julia was very attentive, and calmly spoke to her of the future life and of the religious knowledge she had endeavored to teach her. Chloe was willing to die, and said if she could be permitted in the other world she would watch over Julia and Dedo. She expressed her faith in Christ, and the minister was called to administer to her the Lord's supper. After this she fell asleep with one of her hands pressed closely in Julia's, and the other in Dedo's never to awaken or look upon this dreary and troublesome world again. Dedo took her death very hard, and the family having become so greatly attached to her, deeply and keenly felt her loss, though it was, after all, the heart of Miss Julia into which the arrow of sorrow sank deepest. Slowly the funeral procession wended its way to the burial ground ten miles distant, followed by a number of the colored people of the neighborhood, and a small portion of the whites, whose eyes, moistened with tears, sadly rested upon the coffin as it was lowered to its last resting place.

Dedo never fully recovered from the shock occasioned by the death of Chloe. He very shortly afterward united with the Episcopal church, and always claimed that Julia was the means of his conversion. One year from the time of Chloe's death he fell a victim to the fever and died. They buried faithful Dedo by the side of Chloe, and Julia planted flowers on their graves. Thus ended

the lives of the two faithful servants, who, dying in the fullness of the golden promise of a true conversion, are surely resting in the "Golden City," with God's great reward of an everlasting peace to his children.

Ada at last became tired of her beau, Loren Willson, and took up with another by the name of George Glasgo, who was wealthy, and professed to be a well read gentleman. He made these pretensions because he knew the Judge and his wife were very anxious that Ada should do as well as they expected Julia would do. He would borrow books from the Judge and read a sketch here and there, sufficient to be conversant with the different subjects should the Judge at any time enter into conversation with him. He asked the Judge one day to go with him to visit his farm, which he did. He then and there asked the Judge for his daughter, and, receiving an answer in the affirmative, he drove home, feeling that there was nothing more for him to fear. While Ada loved Loren Willson the better of the two, her parents urged her to marry Mr. Glasgo.

The wedding was done up in a hurry. The guests were invited and all preparations for a grand time were made. While Ada was dressing for her wedding she said: "Oh, I wish I were to be the bride of Loren Willson to-day!" But alas! her decision came too late. Arrayed in her bridal attire she was pronounced the wife of George Glasgo, while her heart still remained in bondage of its first love to another. Nor was this to be the only troubled thought of the young wife. She

had been married but two weeks when she was informed that the furniture of her home, to which he had taken her, had not been paid for, and shortly after was taken from them by the sheriff. The farm he had represented as belonging to him was his father's, and not wholly paid for, so that but a few weeks after her marriage, she found that she had been deceived on every hand. She lived a very unhappy life, and often thought of Loren Willson, who never married.

After some years she was taken sick and died, leaving four children. She never suffered for the comforts of life, as her parents always provided for her, feeling that they were partially responsible for her unhappiness.

Mrs. Collens was determined that Julia should marry a mechanic. Ada having been so unsuccessful, she did not want Julia to excel her. Presently there was a fine looking young man made his appearance in the neighborhood, whose name was Norman Ballard. He was a carpenter and builder by trade, and in looking for contracts for building throughout the country he employed a great many men. He soon found the way to the Judge's house. He was a man who had received a good education, and could make a good appearance wherever he went, and was called a good, jolly fellow by all who knew him. He was very fond of Julia's company, and Mrs. Collens was sure she would at last have her desire to see Julia married to a man of trade fulfilled. When he asked her to make a party, she said:

"Of course, Norman, I will make a party if you will kill the turkeys."

"I most certainly will do so," he replied, and the next morning he was on hand according to promise. Mrs. Collens told him it would not be necessary for him to come before sunset, as the turkeys could not be caught till they went to roost. He said he knew that, but thought he would come and assist in taking up the carpets preparatory to dancing. This she did not like, as she thought it spoiled the selvage of the carpet. They had one room for dancing, but it was too small. She, however, gave her consent to have the carpet taken up, as she would not offend him in any way.

The two step-daughters, Vida and Clara, came to assist Mr. Ballard in removing the tacks, and they were all busy at work when the Judge put in his appearance. He had been absent from home attending court for two weeks. He came in so silently that no one noticed him, and stealing up to Julia, he put his arms around her and stole a kiss. Julia remarked that it was so sweet it ought to be passed around. Vida and Clara insisted that he should not slight them, so he told them to get up and come to him; but they said he must come to them. Julia and Mr. Ballard decided in favor of the girls, so he, laughing, stooped down and kissed them. Wile he was doing so, Julia and Mr. Ballard tipped him over, and threw the carpet upon him. When Mrs. Collens arrived at the scene, they thought it would be fun to put her in the carpet with her husband, and suiting the

action to the word, they quickly lifted her up and threw her by the side of him. She screamed and made a terrible fuss, but the rest only laughed. She said, "Julia, are you not ashamed?"

"I did not do it, mother; it was Mr. Ballard."

"Oh, it was," said she, changing her tone of voice, and laughingly called him a rascal.

The Judge said it was a good joke on him. He enjoyed it, but was sorry that Mrs. Collens did not know that it was Mr. Ballard who played the joke on her; for she, perhaps, would not have made such a fuss about it. She knew the Judge was throwing a slur at her, so she soon left the room.

Norman caught the turkeys that evening, and all things were prepared for the party.

At the proper time the guests began to arrive, and all things being so well arranged, the party proved a grand affair, the supper being one that would have done honor to a king's table. They danced till the "caw, caw," of the crow was heard in the top of the tree near the summer house. The Judge and his wife took an active part, and enjoyed the party with as much hilarity as the younger members. As daylight dawned upon the scene of festivity, the guests one by one took their departure, until all had gone with the exception of Mr. Ballard, who remained to assist in again replacing the carpets. He played the agreeable with success to Mrs. Collens and the rest of the family.

CHAPTER XI.

JULIA ATTENDS CHURCH.

Julia always suspected that Norman was addicted to strong drink, but had no positive proof of it. He invited her to attend church with him on the next Sabbath morning, in company with three other couples, on horseback, as was the custom in those days. She accepted the invitation. The church was ten miles distant, and they had to pass through a village on the way. Julia promised to be ready by 8 o'clock on Sabbath morning. At the appointed time she appeared in a black riding suit, with turban hat on her head, and a black lace scarf thrown loosely over her shoulders, her riding whip in hand, and gracefully seated herself on her horse. She had but just firmly fixed her foot in the stirrup, when she heard the clattering of horses' hoofs in the lane. In a moment Mr. Ballard was at her side.

"Good morning, Miss Julia," said he, tipping his hat as he spoke. "I see you are waiting for me."

"No; I am just ready. Where are the rest of the company?"

"They will be here presently," he replied.

The Judge at this moment came into the yard, and very pleasantly bidding Mr. Ballard good morning, said: "You are going to accompany my daughter to church to-day?"

"I am to have that extreme pleasure," replied Mr. Ballard, his face flushing as he spoke. Julia

noticed that he was extremely polite, but let all thoughts pass for the time.

"Well," the Judge continued, "that is a place I never go, except on Thanksgiving occasions." His remarks were cut short by the arrival of the friends, with whom a general salutation was exchanged, and the Judge, wishing them a pleasant day and safe return, walked leisurely into the house. They were soon upon the roadway from the house, and coupling off two by two, with Ballard and Julia taking the lead, they made a very nice appearance. Mr. Ballard was quite jolly, but Julia was sad, for being of a religious turn of mind, she was thinking of how few times she had the privilege of visiting the house of God; her father even refusing her the privilege of reading the Bible in his presence. Mr. Ballard became more lively as they neared the church, and when Julia looked back she could see the rest laughing at him. They at last reached the church, a log affair, built on the edge of the woods long before the village of Newport was thought of. They had passed through this village, which was situated on an eminence, two miles from the log church. There were no vestibules in those days, and nothing but plain wooden benches for seats. After hitching their horses the gentlemen with their ladies entered the church, and had but just seated themselves when Rev. Bancroft offered the opening prayer, the congregation rising as he did so.

As he was about to seat himself, Mr. Ballard said, "Noble prayer, Bancroft." The congregation looked at the young man with amazement,

and Julia knew that her fears were realized, that he was under the influence of drink. She wished many times that she was at home as she thought of the true condition of the man she had accepted as an escort. He sat quietly until the minister was nearly through with his sermon, when he arose and asked the minister if he was almost through. He said the ladies were getting tired, judging from himself.

Mr. Bancroft said, "Be seated, Mr. Ballard, I shall be through in a few moments." He pitied the young ladies, and Julia particularly, for he knew that Mr. Ballard would, occasionally, take a little too much "wild fire." The sermon was finished, and after singing the closing hymn, the congregation was dismissed. Mr. Bancroft came down the aisle, and spoke to Mr. Ballard, who in turn introduced him to Julia and the rest of the company. Pointing to Julia, he said:

"Mr. Bancroft, there is one of the finest ladies you ever saw."

Julia's heart sank within her, but Mr. Bancroft noticing her dismay, said, "Miss Collens, you must not be frightened from attending worship with us in the future by what it has been your misfortune to pass through to-day. We are acquainted with the habits of Mr. Ballard here, and I hope you will come again very soon. I presume you are Judge Collens' daughter?"

"I am," she replied, "but I would not have been here to-day if I had known that Mr. Ballard was in the habit of becoming intoxicated. We

should be much pleased to have you call on us at any time."

He thanked her for her kind invitation, and said he would be pleased to accept it at the earliest opportunity offered, then extending a hearty invitation to the rest of the company to attend his church, he bade all good bye. They repaired to the horse-block, and were soon on their way home. When within a mile of Newport, Mr. Ballard told the company to look after Julia, and, putting spurs to his horse, was soon out of sight. When they arrived at the hotel, out came Mr. Ballard with a tray full of wine and whiskey. He was determined that they all should take a treat from him; they, of course, refused, but at last, seeing that he was becoming angry, they took the glasses, each one taking a small sip. With this he seemed to be satisfied, and after returning the tray, he came out and again mounted his horse. He said he and Julia would take the lead, as they had done in the morning. The party, thinking nothing more of the proposal, agreed; they rode along quietly for some miles, without his making any demonstrations, when at once, he started his horse, and at the same time struck Julia's horse, which started on a run; she did her best to stop her horse, while he urged it onward. She saw what her fate would be if she relaxed her hold, and that her only hope was to hold on until she reached her father's lane. She knew that Sunflower would stop there. She rounded the corner and dashed up the lane, Ballard at her heels, when the Judge and his wife rushed out, exclaim-

ing, "What is the matter?" Julia fell exhausted into her father's arms. The rest of the company soon arrived, and explained the whole matter. Her father carried her into the house, and gently placed her on the bed, while Henry Burr, the hired man, took Sunflower to the table. Julia was so affected by the fright of her perilous ride, that it was three days before she was herself again.

Mr. Ballard arrived early next morning, to ask Julia's forgiveness. She said, "To err is human, to forgive divine." He said he would never again drink to become intoxicated; and he never did, although he took a dram every day. He thanked the Lord that Julia was not seriously hurt, and asked whether the horse had been injured in any way. He was overheated, that was all. Mrs. Collens never urged Julia to become Mr. Ballard's wife after that, although they were always friends.

CHAPTER XII.

JULIA VISITS DEDO'S AND CHLOE'S GRAVES.

Julia asked Henry to saddle Sunflower, as she wanted to take a ride. He was soon on hand, and she started, saying that she would not be home that night; that she intended going to see her friend Joseph Willson, the father of Ada's discarded lover. With her riding whip in her hand she said good-bye, and rode away. She took the road that led to the burial ground which contained the graves of their faithful slaves—Dedo

and Chloe. She looked around to see that no one was near; and, though those for whom she mourned were colored, she kneeled down and wept bitterly over their graves, saying, "Poor Dedo and Chloe! I have none to watch over me now," for she thought of the faithful friends they had been to her in life. She offered a prayer, silent and alone among the sepulchres of the dead, then wending her way out of the city of the dead, she mounted Sunflower and rode down to the river. The waves were rolling along at her feet, while above the dark clouds obscured the sky. She thought how emblematical was the darkness of the clouds of her feelings. She rode Sunflower close to the bank of the beautiful river, where the tall trees waved their branches, and the hills, the home of the fox and the deer, were covered with wild flowers and moss. She watched the waves as they rolled on, thinking of the graves she had left a few moments before, the flowers of which were moistened by her tears, and of her unhappy home, and wondering whether Dr. Lemon would ever return to her. Little did Julia know what was before her, and, thinking it was time to go, she gently touched Sunflower with the whip and turned his head toward Mr. Willson's, arriving there just before dinner. Carol Willson met her at the gate, and greeted her with:

"How do you do, Julia? I am glad to see you looking so well after your fright of last Sabbath. You had much better been my partner than Mr. Ballard's."

"Oh, that was indeed a sad affair to happen on Sabbath day," she said.

He looked up, and laughingly said:

"I think I shall have to take you in charge myself after this."

His mother, hearing this last remark, came out and said:

"That's right, Carol, take her in charge. How do you do, Julia? I am quite surprised, too, at seeing you, as I supposed you were not able to be out yet. But come in; dinner is just ready, and I am so glad to see you."

Mrs. Willson was a good-natured woman, and would have been very glad to know that Julia would some day become Carol's wife, as she was so much disappointed in Ada's not accepting her son Loren. She had long wished that her family might become connected with that of the Judge's by the marriage of one of his daughters. Dinner being next in order, Mrs. Willson seated Julia and Carol at one side of the table, and told Peggie, the colored girl, to wait upon Julia first, and in a jesting way, remarked:

"Miss Julia may some day, perhaps, be your mistress."

Peggie grinned and said: "Hope so, Missy."

Julia changed the subject as quick as possible, for she knew that Carol, though a good-hearted young man, was wild and she did not feel that she ever could have confidence enough in him to accept him as a husband, though she enjoyed his society. Carol was well pleased with his mother's remark, but said nothing in reply.

"You are not going home to-night, Miss Julia," said Carol.

"No, I did not intend to," see replied. Rising from the table, Carol called Taft, and told him to put Sunflower in the stable, for the night. The evening passed very pleasantly, playing whist, which all seemed to enjoy. Shortly before ending the game, Mrs. Willson remarked that she did so much wish Ada could have been there, and been Loren's partner, instead of herself. Though Loren made no reply, his expression at once betokened his thoughts, and sitting to see the game ended, he shortly after excused himself and retired. Mrs. Willson and the rest of the family chatted together for a little time, when Julia said she would like to retire. She said good-night to Carol, and Mrs. Willson went with her to her room. The bedstead was one of the old fashioned ones, with high posts, and made up so high with feathers that it was almost necessary for one to have a step-ladder to get into it. Mrs. Willson remained with Julia until she was safely in bed, and, bidding her good night, she retired to her own room. The thought came to her, that perhaps Julia might be taken sick during the night, and returning to the room, said, "I will put this whistle on the stand, and if you should wish anything, or feel ill, just blow it, and I will come to you."

"Thank you, I will," said Julia; but she slept soundly until morning, when she arose very much refreshed, by her night's rest, and went out in response to the breakfast call, feeling that she should do ample justice to the meal. The slaves

were all on the porch to speak to her. "Good mornin', Missy Julia," they said. "Good morning to you all," she replied. The younger ones had gathered some flowers, which they gave to her, and the older ones expressed their appreciation of her, bv saying they were glad to see her well again. Julia always spoke kindly to slaves, and she was beloved by all of them.

After breakfast she prepared for her return home. After asking her permission to accompany her, Carol ordered their horses. He had a very fine horse called Rome, and in a few moments both were at the door. Carol and Julia came out, mounted their horses, and saying good bye, rode out of the yard, en route for the Judge's villa. Nothing of much interest happened on the way. Their conversation was mostly about Ada and Loren—how unfortunate it was that they did not get married, for Loren had never been like the same person since the disappointment, and Ada had been an unhappy wife. Carol asked Julia if she would break an engagement after encouraging a gentleman, as Ada did. She answered:

"No. If I should ever engage myself to a young gentleman I would fulfil my engagement, unless I had a very good reason for breaking it. Ada was too young when she engaged herself to your brother, but, after all, as regards the question of myself, I shall not engage in marriage until I am satisfied that I am making a wise choice. Marrying is like buying a ticket in a lottery. I may possibly be unfortunate enough to get the blank, but I will do as my better judgment teaches

me, and if I fail I will be a martyr to my fate. I do not intend to throw myself away on a young man who is wild, or of unsteady habits, for then I should feel as though I had stepped into the matrimonial noose with my eyes open."

By this time they had reached her father's gate, and while waiting for Henry Burr to come and open it, Carol asked Julia how old she was. "Nineteen last November," was her reply. Riding up to the door, they alighted, and Henry took charge of their horses.

Henry Burr was a poor orphan boy, who had come to Judge Collens to find employment. He was thinly clad, and the weather was quite chilly, as the cold winds of October had begun to blow. He was very polite in his manner when asking Judge Collens for employment on his farm, and as he had every appearance of being an honest young man, the Judge employed him. Henry's story was that he, with a brother and sister, were left orphans at the early age of ten, twelve, and thirteen years, he being the youngest. They had no relatives to take charge of them, so they went to strangers. Having lost trace of his brother and sister, he wandered from place to place, accepting all kinds of employment wherever he could get it. Some of the members of the families for whom he worked were kind enough to instruct him in the common branches, so that he had acquired a fair knowledge of books, and by being studious, daily applying himself to his books, he was in possession of a fair common education. Farming he understood to perfection.

CHAPTER XIII.

ANGIE'S DEATH.

Henry told Julia that her sister Angie was very ill with croup, and that they thought she could not live. Julia hastened into the house, followed by Carol, and found her father and mother doing all they could for the little sufferer. She asked hastily: "Have you sent for the doctor? and why did you not send for me?"

They answered: "We did not think she was dangerously ill, until an hour ago. Then we sent William for the doctor, and were expecting you home this morning."

But it was too late. She breathed her last, just as Doctor Warnock came in sight. They were grieved to part with Angie, but were glad to see her out of misery and suffering. They felt better satisfied when the doctor told them that if he had been there in time, he could not have saved her; for it was one of those peculiar cases for which there are no remedies. Julia did not grieve over the loss of her sister, for she felt that she had gone to heaven, and that she would never have to beat against the storms of life, as she herself had done. She asked Carol to return home and inform his parents of the death, and bring them over at once. He was not long in mounting Rome, and soon reached home, where his mother was standing on the porch. She was startled, for she knew something had happened, as it was understood when Carol left home that he would not return for

a few days. He informed his mother of the death of Angie, and of the message which had been sent for her and his father to return with him at once. She immediately sent Taft to inform her husband that she wished to see him at once, and to hitch Flora to the gig.

"Yes, missy; what am de matter?"

"Why, Angie Collens is dead."

"Gora mighta, dat is dreadful," and instead of going to tell Mr. Willson he went to the negro quarters to inform them of what had befallen little Angie, and forgot to find Mr. Willson. He hitched up Flora to the gig, and drove up to the porch, "Missy Willson, the gig am ready!"

"Well," said she, "where is your master?"

"Land, bless you, missa, I done gone and forget to tell de massa what you sed. When Massa Carol tole me dat de angel come and took Missy Angie straight to heaben, I'se done struck. I went right straight to de qua'ta to 'form 'em of de disasta, but I'se off now, missy." Mr. Willson was on hand in a moment, and hastily dressing he was beside his wife and drove off, Carol taking the lead on Rome. Arriving at the Judge's gate, they alighted, and walked quietly into the house, where they were met by the Judge and his wife.

"This is a hard stroke, friend Willson, and it came so unexpectedly."

"True, true," said Mr. Willson, "but it is the road we all have to travel. We are only lent to one another, parent to child, and child to parent. Where do you intend to bury her?"

"I have not yet decided," answered the Judge.

"You can bury her in our private burying ground, if you so desire."

"I thank you kindly, and am glad to accept the offer, for it is near home." Julia and her mother were also pleased with the kind offer of Mr. Willson.

At 3 o'clock next day, the neighbors came in; a prayer was offered by Mr. Nelson, when the pall-bearers came forward and taking up the coffin carried it out, placing it in the gig beside Mr. and Mrs. Willson. Judge Collens and wife were next in the procession, following came Carol and Julia, with the neighbors and the rest of the family. They soon reached the little graveyard, and all that was left of Angie was laid quietly to rest among the green trees where the wild birds sing their requiems over her grave. All returned to their homes to busy themselves in the everyday pursuits of their lives.

Julia, on the following Sabbath, took a walk to the edge of the woods, where there was a rock from which there projected a sort of table or flat surface. Upon this she laid her Bible, and was engaged in reading when she heard the sound of footsteps, and looking around, heard her father say,

"Halloo, Julia, what are you doing here this rather cool day? O, I see, you have been reading the Bible. You are a good girl; you would not read it in the house, because you know how I feel about it. But it is too cold out here for you, and hereafter I will give you the privilege of reading it in your own room."

"I am not cold," she replied, "but am gratified to know that I can read God's word without coming to the woods to do so."

"Come with me," continued her father, "and I will show you to-day where I wish to be buried." Taking her along through the woods, they came to a spot on the State line. "Here," said he, "is where I want you to place all that remains of Judge Collens. I want no stone to mark the place where I lie, and no tears shed over my grave. If I have done any good thing in my life, let my memory live; if not, let me be soon forgotten. Julia," he continued, "will you promise to see that my request is granted?"

"I will promise," said she with tears in her eyes, "that you shall be laid in the spot you have chosen. But oh! how lonely for you to sleep your last sleep in this lone forest. Of course, in the springtime, the leaves will be green and beautiful, which will seem like a mockery, with your dear form moldering away beneath them. Then, when autumn is ushered in, and the leaves become brown and sear, it will remind me that man, like the leaves in the gloom of autumn, shall fall to rise no more. But, oh! dear father, if you would only change your belief, and become a Christian, your Julia could come here and sit by your dear grave, and think of the happy meeting in heaven."

Taking his handkerchief from his pocket, the Judge wiped the tears, unbidden as they were, from his eyes, and taking Julia's arm, they walked

silently home. Nothing more was said upon the subject at that time.

Winter came on. They had received word that they were to be visited by two cousins from Washington. Dena and Rilla came, and after spending the month of January at their uncle's, making a very pleasant visit, they proposed taking Julia back with them, to attend school and be introduced to the society of Washington. Her father gave his consent, but Julia said she did not have clothing made suitable for such a journey. Her father then told Dena to purchase anything Julia might need, and he would pay the bill when he came for her at the end of six months.

CHAPTER XIV.

JULIA ENTERS THE SCHOOL-ROOM—HER RETURN TO THE HAMLET.

They left the Hamlet, as the Judge was wont to call his home, on Tuesday, arriving at Washington in due time. Aunt Sarah, who was an invalid, and had been for some years, was rejoiced to see her children returned home, and glad to see Julia. She was seated in an old fashioned rocking chair, before a glowing coal fire. The girls told their mother that they had brought Julia home with them to attend school, and accompany them to the parties during the winter.

Aunt Sarah asked Julia one day to assist her to

move to the other side of the room. She did so, and when her aunt arose, Julia saw a stocking full of something lying in front of the chair. She asked Julia to hand her the stocking. She picked it up, but could hardly carry it. Her aunt told her that it was full of silver and gold, that she never put it away, for it was her best friend.

On the following Monday she entered the school-room, accompanied by her cousin Dena, who introduced her to her teacher, Mr. McDougal. He said he was glad to have her as one of his pupils, and hoped they would become good friends, and that she would enjoy the school term. He then introduced Julia to the scholars. She informed him that her education was limited, as her father had a large family of sons and daughters to educate, and as he desired to see his sons as far advanced as his means would allow, the education of his daughters was a secondary matter. Mr. McDougal replied:

"I will do all I can for you in the way of giving you instruction, so that you may progress as rapidly as possible in your studies."

"Many thanks for your kindness," said Julia.

That evening Julia returned to her aunt's with bright prospects before her. She was very much pleased with the appearance and treatment of the teacher and scholars—all seemed so pleasant, and made her so welcome. The same evening she received an invitation, in company with her cousins, to attend a party at a Mr. Logan's. Julia was so pleased that she almost forgot her former troubles. When she and her cousin Rilla retired, she was so

full of joy that sleep had entirely deserted her, and as she gazed through the window at the stars, she thought they never before appeared so bright.

She felt as though they were twinkling for her, and that the dark cloud of her life was passing away. After she had retired some little time, the thought came to her that she had forgotten to thank God for this blessing. She arose, and quietly kneeling down before the bed, she offered up a simple prayer to her Heavenly Father, and thanked him for the privilege of being able to see the silver lining peeping from beneath the cloud which had so many years darkened her life. She prayed fervently that the sun might shine forever more brightly upon her life in the future, and that whatever might befall her, the hand of her Heavenly Father should ever guide her safely to the haven of rest.

She returned to bed, and as she lay meditating, the thought occurred to her that she would have no dress suitable to wear. So, speaking to her cousin, she said:

"Rilla, I shall have no dress to wear to the party. What shall I do?"

"Oh, don't worry, cousin, you shall wear my dark drab silk. It will just fit you. Then Dena will get a dress made for you next week," said Rilla.

"Thanks for your kindness, dear cousin," she said.

The old-fashioned clock on the mantel struck two. and Morpheus claimed them till morning.

As the bell rang for breakfast Julia hastily dressed herself and went to her aunt's room.

"Good morning, aunt. Oh, I am so happy this morning. How are you?" asked Julia.

Her aunt said:

"I am as well as usual. You know I am never well. But I am glad you are so happy. You are in the first joyous bloom of life; but my day is passed. I am only waiting for the reaper, Death, to claim me for his own."

"If only you are ready, aunt, it will be a happy exchange."

Her aunt replied:

"How strange to hear the daughter of a deist speak in that way."

She assisted her aunt in getting to the breakfast table, when Dena, coming in with a cheery "good morning," said:

"Julia, I will have a new dress made for you next week, so you can attend parties with us after to-night."

"She is going to-night," replied Rilla, "and she will wear my drab silk. It will become her, and it fits her nicely."

"All right," said Dena, "I never thought of that."

The question of what she should wear to the party being definitely settled, Julia started to school that morning feeling very happy and gay. She studied hard, as the time for her to remain was but six months, and she felt that every moment was precious, and must be improved. When Julia came home from school that evening

Rilla had everything for her attendance to the party in readiness. She dressed Julia in the drab silk as she had promised, and put on a white lace collar, fastened at the neck with a handsome blue bow. Rilla said:

"Julia, you look superb to-night. That drab suit, with your hair curled and dressed as it is, is indeed very becoming. I hope you will cut Dena out of her beau to-night, for I know she is not anxious for you to attend the party. And wouldn't I laugh if you should! It would be fun for me, for she thinks she is so smart, and is always throwing slurs at me."

"Oh, Rilla, I think you wrong Dena," said Julia.

Rilla replied:

"Well, you will find out what is under that smooth face before you leave Washington."

Dena was waiting for them in her mother's room, and when Julia and Rilla entered, a frown passed over her face, but she said nothing. They were not long in reaching Mr. Logan's mansion. Lights were flitting from room to room, and the guests were gathering. Just as they stepped into the room Mr. Anderson, Dena's beau, stepped up and Dena introduced her cousin Julia.

"Judge Collen's daughter, of whom I have heard you speak?"

"Yes, sir," she replied.

"I am happy to meet you, Miss Collens. I have heard your father highly spoken of."

Mrs. Logan entered, and was introduced, as was Mr. Logan also. She then showed them to

where they could lay aside their wraps, after which they returned to the parlor.

Among the guests who had arrived was Mr. Wallace Perrie, Rilla's intended. She at once introduced him to her cousin, expressing a hope that they would be warm friends. Soon after this a play was proposed by one of the company, which was to consist of grammatical exercises. A sentence was given, and the players had to name the parts of speech it contained. Saying the play was a new one to her, and as she was a stranger among them, Julia begged to be excused. But they were not willing to accept her excuse, and said they could instruct her in a short time. She then said to them:

"My friends, I have never had an opportunity of studying grammar, sufficient to do as you wish me to; I am attending school here, at present, and am going to take that study this term, and I hope you will excuse me."

Dena blushed to think her cousin would show her ignorance in that way, and make her ashamed. But Mr. Anderson rose to his feet, and said: "You will also excuse me from the play, and I will try to entertain Miss Collens, for I admire her candor." He spent most of the evening conversing with her, to the disappointment of Dena, and to the delight of Rilla. The party dispersed at an early hour, the company all wishing Julia a pleasant and profitable time, and expressing a hope of seeing her often. As they left the house Mr. Anderson walked home with Julia and Dena, followed by Mr. Perrie and Rilla. When they

arrived at home, Mr. Anderson said he would call on Dena, the Thursday evening following.

When they retired that night Julia said she was very sorry she was obliged to expose her ignorance of grammar, on their account, but for herself she did not care; she always believed in telling the truth. Rilla said she was glad of it,—it was fun for her, because it plagued Dena.

Julia went to school the next day, but did not feel so light-hearted and happy, as she had done before, for the thought of what Rilla had said to her in regard to Dena's "smooth face," etc., troubled her very much. That evening, at the tea table, she told them she had begun to study grammar.

"I am glad of it," said Dena, "I hope I shall not be mortified again. I felt ashamed of my uncle to think that he had not given his daughter a better education, and he a judge of the court, too."

It touched Julia, to have anything said about her father, for she felt that he always had done the best he could for them, so she replied:

"If my father had been fortunate enough to have had one hundred thousand dollars left him by an uncle, he could have educated his daughters, as well as Aunt Sarah." This was a sore thrust, but Dena had to take it with the best grace possible.

The next Thursday evening Mr. Anderson put in his appearance, and Dena received him in the parlor. He had not long been seated when he asked for Miss Collens, and said he would like to

see her. Dena knew it would be best for her to call Julia, and, going to her mother's room, invited her to the parlor. Julia followed her, and, as she entered the room, Mr. Anderson rose and shook hands with her, and was very glad to see her. After spending a short time with them, Julia withdrew, and said she would again go to her aunt's room. Mr. Anderson wished her to remain with them, during the evening, but Dena insisted on her going, as her mother needed her attention. She bade them good night, and left the room; and Mr. Anderson made up his mind never to call on Dena again.

They were all invited to a party at C. M. Price's, but Julia's promised dress had apparently been forgotten. She asked Dena to get one for her, but she replied:

"I do not think it best for you to have your mind taken up with parties, while you are attending school. Besides your aunt is becoming more feeble, and needs you to take care of her, when Rilla and I go out."

Julia then remembered what Rilla had said, and she felt as though the silver lining of the cloud was again being darkened. However, she studied hard every day, and spent the evening with her aunt, or with Rilla and Mr. Perrie, when they were not invited out. Rilla had no authority to buy Julia a dress, or clothing, as her uncle had given orders to Dena to use her own judgment in providing for Julia's wants. Had the orders been given to Rilla she would have gladly procured for Julia all she wished to have.

Judge Collens, after a six weeks' absence of his daughter, made his sister and Julia a visit. Dena told him how she had economized in not buying Julia clothing; that when she attended parties they loaned her dresses to wear, and that he would have but ten dollars to pay for some articles which she had bought for Julia to wear to school. Julia begged her father to take her home, for she was homesick. He concluded to do so, and she informed her teacher, who was very sorry, as she was progressing rapidly in her studies. She told him that she could not live under the tyrannical treatment of her cousin Dena, and with a heavy heart she bade farewell to her teacher and schoolmates. She was somewhat wiser in book knowledge, but far more so in the knowledge of the world. The next morning all things were in readiness to start, and after bidding her aunt and Rilla good bye, Julia started with her father, without a word to Dena, who followed them to the gig and said, "Are you not going to bid me good bye, Julia?"

She replied, "I am not. Honesty and truth I admire, but falsehood and deceit I abhor."

They started away, and as they rode along she told her father all. He was surprised and said, "I little thought Dena was so treacherous. Well, my child, you will find, as you travel along through life, that it is filled with more dross than gold, and that we are doomed to disappointment. Mankind differs as much in honor and honesty as the little hills differ from the great mountains. You must

watch and learn. I am up in years, and I can not read human nature yet."

She replied, "I am learning that fast; and dear father, if it were not for my faith in the Bible, and that Jesus Christ died for sinners, such as I, and the hope I have beyond the grave, I would sink by the wayside in despair. Oh, my dear father, do return to your Christian faith. Peruse the Scriptures daily. For He who rules on high and reigns supreme over all the earth says, 'Every son and daughter whom He receiveth He chasteneth, and whom He chasteneth not are bastards, and not sons and cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.' Cease to read Tom Paine and Voltaire. Remember that the great stumbling block which came before you was only a chastisement. Our churches are full of hypocrites; these are the tares. But that is a question with which we have no right. We can both enter the portals of heaven if we try to obey the commandments and strive to do good works as evidence of our faith."

"You are quite a little preacher, Julia," he said, half laughing, "and I hope you may have many converts," as a frown passed over his face.

"Promise me, father, before we reach home."

"I cannot promise you yet, my child. Please say no more."

They reached the Hamlet at 7 P. M., and both entered the house.

"How do you do, mother?" said Julia.

"I am well," she said, shaking her hand.

"Oh, I am so glad to get home," continued Julia.

"Then you think this is not such a bad place after all?"

"I jumped out of one lion's den into another," said Julia, "but I prefer this one because it has a better keeper."

She alluded to her father, who smiled and went into the library.

CHAPTER XV.

THE MARRIAGE OF JAMES—THE WALK.

The monotony of life continued the same, with the exception of several parties in the vicinity, which Julia always attended accompanied by Carol Willson. After the session of court closed Judge Collens informed his family that he was going to eastern Ohio to purchase a farm for his two eldest sons by his first wife. Mrs. Collens filled the saddle bags with such articles as he should need for the journey, which would detain him perhaps two weeks. It was a beautiful spring day, in the latter part of May, when he started, and at the end of three days he found the government land which he wished to purchase. He went to a small town called Wasset, the county-seat, and entered two hundred and sixty acres, dividing this between his two sons, William and James. He employed men to build log houses, and left money with General Wilcox to pay the men when the work was completed. He then returned home. In two

months he received word from General Wilcox that the work was done. He informed James of the purchase, and told him he thought he had better get married and take up his home on his share of the land. James had been paying some little attention to a young orphan girl by the name of Lida Allen, and, having no home or kindred friends, she accepted James' proposal of marriage. He told his parents of his intended marriage, when his father said he would see the girl first, so called upon her and found her a pleasant, sensible sort of person. He spoke of his son being deficient in intellect, which she said she had known but thought he would make her a kind husband, and that she would be able to get along nicely with him. They were married shortly after. The Judge gave them a good fitting out, and sent them to their new home, accompanied by Henry Burr to bring back the team. They arrived safely. Henry assisted them in setting up their household goods, returning home the next week.

Summer was now far advanced. Esquire Wallace's two daughters had come to spend a few weeks with Julia. About 10 o'clock Sabbath morning Carol Willson, Norman Ballard, and Doctor Lemoin arrived at the Hamlet. After dinner they proposed taking a walk, and they wandered over the hills and through the valleys until they were all very tired and hungry. Dark clouds were fast rising in the western sky, giving every appearance of an approaching storm. So they concluded to bend their footsteps to the nearest house. Julia assured them that if they

would all do as she did she would secure them a good supper, but they must not laugh. This she said in the way of a joke, but it turned out a reality. They all agreed to her proposal. They were soon at the house of Mr. Post. Rapping at the door, a pleasant voice said, "Come in," and Julia stepped in.

"How do you do, Miss Collens? Why, it's good for sore eyes to see you," said Mrs. Post.

After introducing the rest of the company Mr. Post came in.

"I am glad the storm came up, John, for see what nice company it has brought us," said his wife, at the same time taking their hats and bonnets. Very soon the gentlemen began to smile, but Julia, looking at them, shook her head. A little boy, with a dirty face, soon came in. Julia patted him on the head and said:

"What a pretty little boy, Mrs. Post;" then passed him on to the rest of the company to do likewise. They followed suit, and the girls felt disposed to laugh. Julia again shook her head, when another child put in its appearance, looking even worse than the first. Julia praised this one also, the rest of the company doing the same. Presently Julia said:

"Mrs. Post, I guess we had better be going, as the storm seems to have cleared away."

"Indeed," said she, "you will do no such thing. You are not going until you get some supper."

"Thank you," said Julia in behalf of the rest



of her friends. "We will accept of your hospitality," and Mrs. Post was off to the kitchen.

As John was coming through the room, she said:

"Oh, John, I am so glad they are going to accept our hospitality. Bring in some wood, John, while I fill the teakettle."

After Mrs. Post had left the room, Carol said:

"Julia, I hope there are no more youngsters to pat; for, good gracious, if there are, we will laugh in spite of ourselves."

Just then five more arrived upon the scene.

"Good heavens!" said Ballard, "how many more? Girls, I think Julia intended to have us earn our supper."

It was not long before they were invited to come to the table, and a grand, old fashioned supper it was; and seating themselves all did justice to the substantial viands. Just as they had about finished the meal a smile flitted across Julia's face as she asked Mrs. Post how she came to marry John.

"Well, I will tell you," she said, sitting back in her chair. "John came to our house and knocked. I says, 'Come in;' so in stepped Mr. Post. I was sitting in the big arm chair, and he says, 'Sallie, will you have me?' I was in a kind of a dose of a sleep, and when I wakened I hated to refuse. So John said he was glad it was over. The next day we were married at 'Squire Ginnises. And just see what blessings we have had. Look at our beautiful flock of children."

It was time for them to go, and leaving the

table they were soon ready to start. Thanking Mrs. Post for her kindness they returned to the Hamlet. Julia was highly complimented for the way she managed to get them so nice a supper. She said she did not deserve any credit, as the original thought was at first a joke.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PARTY.

Mrs. Willson sent the colored boy, Tom, over for Julia and the other ladies. He came to the door of the Hamlet and said:

"Missy Julia, Missa Willson and Massa Carol sent me ober to bring you and the two Missy Wallace wid you, ober to Massa Willson's house."

"I hope you don't intend to take us all on one horse," said Julia, laughing.

Tom rolled up his big eyes, shook his woolly pate, and said:

"No, Missa Julia, I specks you to ride my hoss and de two Walla girls to ride yours."

"Oh, that is the way, Tom. Then what are you going to ride?" said Julia.

"Oh, I rides shank's mare," replied Tom.

"Oh, no," replied Julia, "you shall ride behind me; it is too far to walk with that sore foot."

"I golla, Missa Julia, you's de missy for me; I'll post you now. But don' you tell the Walla gals," said Tom.

She went and told her father and the Wallace girls of the invitation, and while the young ladies were getting ready, returned to Tom to be "posted," as he called it.

"Now, Missy Julia," said Tom, "you won't 'spose Tom, if he posts you?"

"No, I will not, Tom," she said.

"Well, you see, Missy," continued he, "dat Massa Carol is gwine for to make a big shake foot for you and de oder misseys. He has visited all de country roun', an' told all de nigga qua'ta to be on han' to wait on the gemmen an' ladies. I s'pose dey will all get fassicated, it am such a warm night. Golla, won't Massa Carol kick up his heels? Now, Missy Julia, if Massa Carol 'spects anyting, don' tell on me. An' now I tole you what Massa Carol don' dis mornin'. He made little black Mint stan' in front ob de fiah, while he put one fut on each one ob her shoulders an' warmed hisself. Mint cried, for you see de fiah was too hot. Massa laughed, and made her stan' dere till he got ready to take his feet down. Dat is de way us poo' culled folks has to take it, jes' because de Lor' made us black."

Tom sat on a chair under the maple tree, while Julia went to dress for the party. In the meantime her father had told Henry Burr to saddle Julia's horse and his. The girls were soon ready; the horses were brought to the door, and after Julia had seated herself in the saddle, she said: "Tom, get on behind me." Tom grinned and took his place. They all said good-bye as Henry opened the gate. They were not long in reaching

the Willson mansion, where Mr. Willson met them at the door and bid them welcome. In rushed Mrs. Willson, exclaiming:

"Oh, I am so glad you have come. Carol will be more than pleased, and so will Loren. Just make yourselves at home, ladies, I have to give orders to the servants in the kitchen. I wish Carol would get a wife to fill my place before long," she said, casting a sly glance at Julia, so the Miss Wallaces would not notice it. Julia smiled and said:

"I do not think I would be a good hand to direct servants, so think I will never undertake the task."

Mr. Willson was a very pleasant man, and a great friend of Judge Collens. He entertained the young ladies until Carol and Loren appeared, then excused himself, saying he would put a couple of substitutes in his place. They spent a jolly afternoon, and at 5 o'clock Mrs. Willson announced to them that tea was ready. While they were at table the kitchen door flew open, and exposed three large turkeys to view, dressed for the oven. Mrs. Willson closed the door as quickly as possible, but not before the girls had caught a glimpse of them. They knew from that there was something up, but said nothing. After tea they went out into the yard, wandered among the flower-beds, gathered bouquets, and talked of the language of flowers, until the sun was setting red in the western horizon. They repaired to the house, and placed their bouquets on the parlor mantel. Very soon guests began to arrive, and

it was not long before the girls knew what was meant by the turkeys. Julia thought Tom had told her the truth when he said they had invited all de country around. There was an immense company of young people, and they did justice to the music in the merry dance. At 10 o'clock they all seated themselves to rest, preparatory to going to supper, which was to be served at half-past eleven. In a few moments in came little black Mint, to the center of the room, and said, "Massa Ca'ol he feel mighty nice to-night, playin' de 'greeable wid Missa Julia and de odder ladies. You ought to see him dis mornin' wid one leg on each ob my shoulders, wid his 'spenders hanging down his back, wa'min' his feet. He kept me dere till I cried 'cause de fiah blistered my face. But he can play de gemman fo' de ladies." With that Mint lit out.

They all took a hearty laugh at Carol's expense, and told him to be careful how he warmed his feet hereafter.

Supper was soon announced. The musicians struck up a march, and each couple marched to the table, which was loaded with luxuries. After supper they returned to the dancing-room, and danced until 2 o'clock in the morning, closing the dance with the "eight reel." It was not long before the guests had all departed. The darkeys had gone to their quarters, and quiet reigned supreme at the Willson mansion once more, except that the howl of the dog and the whistling of the wind through the casement of the window, seemed

to indicate that a storm was coming in the distance.

At 8 o'clock next morning, the girls were wakened by a clap of thunder. They arose and dressed themselves quickly. The lightning flashed, the thunder rolled, and a terrific wind storm was upon them, hurling off the tops of the trees, and scattering all things in its way. It took off the top of the maple that stood in front of Judge Collens' porch, where Tom had sat the day before, and visited the negro quarters, taking the roofs of their huts and hurling them in the air. The thatched roof of the barn was also blown off. All were frightened, and waited in suspense to see if any one would be injured, or any greater damage done. Black Polly and Dote thought "dat de Lawd had surely cum and was gwine to take de darkies fust," at least they said "He took de roof off de cabins, and left Massa Willson's 'lone." The storm did not last long, nor do a great deal of damage, as it was broken in its violence by the high hills. Judge Collens sent Henry over, as soon as the storm had abated, to tell the girls that all was safe at home, so they need not worry. They remained three days at Mr. Willson's, and had a grand visit, returning home highly pleased. Loren Willson played the agreeable to the Misses Wallace, Mr. Ballard also paying them considerable attention, but Carol spent most of his time with Julia, and finally asked her to become his wife, which she at once and in a friendly manner refused to do.

Judge Collens frequently loaned Esquire Wal-

lace money to dress his daughters, who were often better clad than the Judge's own family. Jane was a perfect beauty of a blonde type, tall and stately; her sister was a brunette and rather fine looking; and both were professed friends of the Collens girls and family. They left for home in a few days, after making Julia promise to return their visit at no distant day.

They had been gone but one week when Miss Allison arrived from the town of Lynville, Ohio, a place where the Judge often stopped when he was away from home on business. Mr. Allison, her father, was from the state of Maryland. He and the Judge were good friends and he always welcomed him to his home. The Judge had invited Miss Jennie Allison, the daughter, to come and spend a week at his country residence, with his daughters, and she had accepted the invitation. She took quite a fancy to Vida, Julia's half sister, and insisted upon her returning home with her. Mrs. Collens was very anxious that she should go, as she so seldom went from home. She was a neat little body, and could pass in society quite well if she did not endeavor to carry on a conversation, but that she could not do without making it at once evident to those with whom she was talking that she was deficient. Julia assisted her in getting ready. They left on Monday of the following week, and arrived safely at Mr. Allison's. Vida was pleased with the village, as well as with Mr. and Mrs. Allison, who made her very welcome.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE MARRIAGE OF VIDA COLLENS, ALSO OF HENRY BURR.

There was a widower, by the name of Van Mert, boarding at Mr. Allison's. He was reputed to be a man of means and without children. He at once took a fancy to Vida, upon being introduced to her, and when she had been there a week he asked her to become Mrs. Van Mert. She was on the shady side of thirty, and had never before had an offer of marriage. She told him she would be happy to become his wife. He asked her how long she intended to remain, and when she said "one week" he proposed to marry her on the following Tuesday. She consented, and he then informed Mr. and Mrs. Allison. They, of course, said very little, but thought it all right. The wedding took place at their residence on Tuesday evening, and Vida was installed mistress of the Van Mert mansion. Mr. Van Mert wrote immediately to Judge Collens; and told him he had married his daughter, and that he need not look for her to return home. Of course it was a great surprise to all of them, Judge Collens wondering how a man of sense could choose Vida for a wife. He concluded that he and Julia would visit his new son-in-law, so hitched Sunflower to the gig and they started. They arrived safely, and found him to be a very fine man and wealthy. The Judge said:

"Mr. Van Mert, I am surprised that a man of

your ability and judgment should make such a choice. Though she is my daughter, it surprises me. Could you not discern that she lacked ordinary sense?"

"I did not until it was too late," he replied.

"I hope you will be kind to her. You will in all probability be released by her death in a short time, as she is consumptive," said the Judge.

While this conversation was going on, Mrs. Van Mert was busy in another room entertaining Julia. She asked her to assist her in pulling out a trunk from under the bed in which Mr. and Mrs. Van Mert slept. It was all both of them could do to move it out. Vida unlocked it and raised the lid. It was full of silver coins. Julia said: "Vida, I hope you do not make a practice of showing this to everybody."

"Of course I do; what would be the use of having it if I would not show it."

"Why, Vida," said Julia, "somebody will rob the house if they know there is so much money in it."

"Is that so," said Vida; "I thought it would be nice to show it."

Julia told Mr. Van Mert of it, and, thanking her, he said he would attend to the matter.

He dressed Vida elegantly, and was very kind to her. The Judge invited them to come home and make a visit, and they started for the Hamlet next morning. The weather was very pleasant, and the road wound around the hills, making the trip a very pleasant one.

"I think," said Julia, "that I have had a very

solemn warning at sister Vida's never to marry a cousin."

"Always remember that," said her father. "Would to God I had never taken such a step. But regrets are useless. They serve only as warnings to others. My children are only index boards to keep other travelers from taking the wrong road."

The Judge rested a few weeks, then started for the county seat, as it was but a few weeks before the next term of court would open. Henry Burr superintended the farm as he could only have done his own, so that the Judge could always leave all things pertaining to his farm in safety.

A family by the name of Hennings emigrated to that part of the country from the East, and with them came a little boy and a young lady. She was the affianced wife of Mr. Hennings' brother. They were all wealthy people in high standing, and, who, after accomplishing her ruin, left her to the cold, cruel world, her parents having disowned her and turned her from the door of her childhood. Mr. George Hennings and wife took her in, and told her that if she would go with them they would always treat her as a sister, as they considered that she was truly their brother's wife. Her name was Helen Swales. She accepted their offer, and the whole family settled near the Collens farm. Helen went out sewing among the neighbors, and, being engaged to sew at Judge Collens', she became acquainted with Henry Burr. One evening they proposed a game of euchre, and, after a few moments, Henry Burr bet himself against Helen, and

he first game won her. He, of course, claimed his prize. She thought he was only joking, as she was fifteen years his senior. He, however, told her he was earnest in his proposal, and held her to her promise. Knowing the good reputation he bore throughout the neighborhood she was well satisfied, as she thought she could have a home of her own, though it might be ever so humble. She frankly told him the unfortunate circumstances of her life, and said:

"My parents turned me out and disowned me, and the brother and wife of the man I should have married have taken me in, given myself and child a home, and prevented me from going down to a life of degradation. I have lived an honorable life ever since. Now you know it all, Mr. Burr. Do you still wish the bet to be paid as you won it?"

"I do," he said emphatically. "I honor you for your truthfulness, and think none the less of you for having been betrayed. I, too, am alone in life, and think you and I might live happily together. We are both poor, and we will climb the hill to wealth as best we can; and, as our courtship has been a novelty, so, also, let our marriage."

Helen assented, and the time of the wedding was set for one week from that evening, which was Monday. Helen went home and informed Mr. and Mrs. Hennings, while Henry disclosed the news to the Judge and family, inviting them, at the same time, to attend the wedding. The guests were Julia and Clara Collens, the friends of Mr. Hennings, and the familes for whom Helen had been sewing. The ceremony took place at 8

o'clock, when grand refreshments were served, and good wishes for the prosperity and happiness of their future life extended to them. Julia in behalf of her father and mother, invited Mr. and Mrs. Burr to accompany her home next morning, which they did, and after spending one week, went to housekeeping in a small town on the river.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DR. DENIT.

Julia was getting ready to visit the Misses Wallace. Dr. Denit arriving before her departure, she proposed that he should accompany her, as an invitation from the girls had been extended to him. He consented to go, and, after dinner, Sunflower and the Doctor's horse were saddled and brought out, who soon carried them to Esq. Wallace's. They had a very fine visit of two days, when Julia said they must return, or, she at least must do so. The girls did all they could to persuade the Doctor to remain a few days longer, but he said he could not comply with their request, and returned with Julia. Jane Wallace was much disappointed, for she fancied the Doctor, and would have been glad to get into his good graces.

Before they reached home a heavy storm overtook them, so they rode into the woods for safety and shelter. They had just reached the thicket when they were confronted by a wolf. They were

so much frightened they hardly knew what was best to do. The rain was falling, the lightning flashed, while peal upon peal of thunder rent the sky. Thinking that of "two evils they would choose the least," they put their spurs to their horses and made for home as fast as they could be carried, their clothes being soon drenched with rain. The horses, puffing and panting, dashed up to the Hamlet gate, and Judge Collens and wife, hearing the tramping of the horses, stepped in haste to the door. The Doctor jumped quickly from his horse, and, assisting Julia to dismount, threw the reins over the hitching post, opened the gate, and both rushed into the house.

The Judge asked the Doctor, in a joking way, whether they were John Gilpin and wife.

"No," said the Doctor, "we had no bottles to balance on each side,"—otherwise he would admit he resembled him.

Julia had soon exchanged her wet clothing for dry, and the Doctor, in taking off his overcoat, found his other clothing quite dry. Mrs. Collens asked how it happened they were out in the storm. The Doctor replied:

"When we left Esquire Wallace's it was cloudy, but we thought we could reach home before the rain came upon us. We were riding leisurely along, conversing upon a political subject, when the storm burst upon us; the thunder rolled like artillery; the lightning flashed vividly, and the rain poured in torrents. We rode into the woods under a large tree, for shelter, where we were confronted by a wolf. I now think it was alone, for

I noticed when we started up our horses, it seemed to be frightened, and ran back into the woods. We never looked back to see whether it was in pursuit of us or not."

The Judge, who had absented himself to order Quin, the hired man, to put the horses in the stable, now entered. The Doctor repeated their adventure to him, and he said:

"You acted wisely, for I think there was probably a pack of wolves not far distant."

The subject was dropped, and dinner announced. The Judge thought the Doctor was a pious man. Therefore, when they were all seated at the table, he, for politeness' sake, asked the doctor to ask a blessing. He raised his head and began: "Let man be praised when woman's pleased, it is but now and then; let's eat our diet in peace and quiet, in the name of the Lord, amen." Not a smile went round the table. The Judge, though a deist, did not like to have any one make fun of religion. The Doctor sat silent until all were waited upon. He then said:

"Judge, how would it have sounded to say 'Dr. Denit and wife,' instead of 'John Gilpin and wife?'"

He replied: "I think it would have sounded quite well."

"I think," said Julia, "that it would have sounded very badly, for I should decidedly dislike to be the wife of a man who has shown himself so blasphemous, over the bountiful supply which God in his goodness has bestowed upon us."

Dr. Denit blushingly replied: "I humbly ask

pardon if I have injured the feelings of any here. I acted as I did, simply to show the Judge that I was an unbeliever, little thinking that his daughter was striving to follow the precepts of the Bible."

Mrs. Collens had discarded her Quaker belief and adopted that of her husband. She quickly replied, "Julia had much better follow the precepts of her father, and not strive so much to appear wiser than she is."

The Judge did not like to hear his wife slur his favorite daughter in that manner, and he quickly replied, "We may all be glad to follow her footsteps yet. She may be that lone star that shines forth in Heaven to lead us to higher and better things."

Her mother said angrily, "I shall never follow it," and left the room.

The rain had ceased, and dinner being over the Doctor and Judge went out for a walk. The hills, covered with green trees, looked lovely after the shower, all nature showing forth in its wonted beauty. The Doctor said:

"You have a wise child, Judge. I admire her for her good sense, amiable disposition, and independence, but henceforth I can only be her friend. I can read that plainly; I made my mistake at the dinner table."

"I fear you did," said the Judge.

After walking some time they returned to the house. That evening they spent in playing euchre and whist. Next morning before the Doctor left, he said:

"You will yet be my friend, Julia, will you not?"

"I will," she replied, "and hope we may always be. The difference in our religious opinions need make us none the less friends. You know the stars in the firmament differ from each other, yet they all give a shining light. Some shine brighter than others, yet they all have their duties to perform, and in my opinion the human family is governed under the same law. God created us with different intellects, but He has given his children, or, at least most of them, reasoning powers, of which they are expected to make use in studying the future world, and there is no way by which one seeking truth can find it, except an honest perusal of God's word, and comparing it with the workings and laws of nature. Too many are claiming that science is in advance of the Bible. But the Scriptures say: 'Ye believe in the Father, believe also in me.' And all who believe in Christ and strive to do his commandments, will be saved. 'Broad is the road that leads to death, and thousands walk therein. Narrow is the road that leads to life, and few there be that find it.' Now, Doctor, do we not find this to be true in everyday life? We see thousands going in the sinful path, and few that are walking in the bright path that leads to Heaven. Stop now for a moment and think whether I am not correct, though I am a poor preacher."

The Doctor thanked Julia, and said he would take time and study it. He acknowledged that he had thought nothing about the future world.

He believed there was a Supreme Ruler, and thought no farther. He bad Julia good-bye, saying:

"When I make my next visit to the Hamlet I hope I may be much better if not more wise."

CHAPTER XIX.

DEATH OF LIDA COLLENS.

We will now return to James Collens. Months had rolled away. The bloom of the summer flowers had long since faded; icicles had formed on the eaves of the cottages; snowflakes had fallen, and lay as a carpet over the brown earth beneath. The trees on the hillsides were hung with beautiful festoons of snow, and everything, as far as the eye could reach, seemed to be crystallized. The family were seated by the old-fashioned fireplace at the Hamlet, when Mrs. Collens remarked

"I wonder how James and his wife are prospering in their forest home."

The Judge replied, "I would be rejoiced to know. I do hope he is kind to her."

Just then they heard footsteps at the kitchen door. Clara opened it, and there was James. After the usual salutation and hand-shaking, they asked him how is wife was. "I just came home to tell you that we have a baby at our house," he replied.

"How old is it?" asked his mother.

"Two days old, when I left."

"For heaven's sake, whom did you leave with her?" gasped the Judge.

"Why, I left her alone. I piled a lot of wood in the house, and left plenty of provisions, and came home to tell you we had a baby. She cried when I left, but I told her she could get along, for you would want to know it."

"How long have you been on the road?" asked the Judge.

"Only three days," he replied.

"Eat dinner as fast as possible, and make haste and return home. Quin, get up the black pony for him to ride," said the Judge And while he was eating dinner, his mother filled the saddle-bags with provisions. He mounted the pony, and his father told him to waste no time in getting back to his wife and baby. He said, "good-bye," and rode off. But instead of going home, he went about five miles to visit some old associates. Mr. Ballard came and informed Judge Collens of his son's whereabouts. Julia said, "Father, have Quin hitch Sunflower to the gig immediately. We must take James home. I am afraid we will find our poor sister dead."

While the horse was being hitched up, Mrs. Collens put up ample provision and plenty of clothing for Lida and the baby. They were not long in getting started and overtaking James. He had finished his visit, and started for home. It was a sad journey. Every mile seemed ten. The second day brought them to the log cabin that the Judge had ordered built a little more than two years previous. They were glad to leave the gig, as they

were worn out by traveling day and night. They climbed the fence, and went to the door, knocking gently for fear of frightening poor Lida. They waited a moment, but no answer. All was silent within. They lifted the latch and entered, and their worst fears had been realized, for cold in death lay the form of her who had been left to battle the pangs of death alone, even as she had done the trials of her life. Nestled close to her breast was the innocent babe, which God in his mercy had taken to dwell among the angels on high, forever sheltered from the batterings of the stormy sea of this life. At such a sight Julia fainted. Judge Collens' strong frame quivered like an aspen leaf, as he looked down upon the pallid face of mother and child, and at his simple son,--that husband and father, down whose cheeks the tears were rolling, for simple though he was, he loved his wife. His father, in the agony of his distress, said, "My poor boy! my poor boy! you are not to be blamed."

Julia recovered from her fainting spell, and James gathered some wood and made a fire. Julia asked, "What is that noise?"

James replied, "It is Sago in under the bed." At the sound of his name he came from his hiding place, put his paws on his mistress' bed and whined, then looked at his master. "Come here, Sago," said James. He patted him on the head, saying, "Poor Sago, what will we do?" He seemed to realize his situation.

Mr. McFern, a distant neighbor, chanced to call, and on hearing of their situation, he said he w uld

bring his wife at once. He told them that as he was passing one day, he noticed Mrs. Collens out in the snow getting wood, but he did not know that she was sick or alone. He went home and returned with his wife, who prepared Mrs. Collens and baby for burial. They were placed in a neat coffin; a few neighbors assembled in the forest to pay the last tribute of respect. They placed the coffin in a wagon, and dropped a tear of pity upon it, as the thought of her being left alone to die came vividly to their minds, and sadly they wended their way to the little graveyard about four miles distant. They returned to the desolated cabin. The wind howled as if to mock them in their misery. James concluded to remain and make his home with Mr. McFern, and Julia and her father left for home the following Monday.

As they were riding along, her father spoke to her of a cousin, Edwin Walker, who was coming to make them a visit. "He is a very fine young man, and one who is worthy a splendid wife, but the lesson of to-day must warn you never to marry a cousin." When they arrived at home all were anxious to hear the news. Mrs. Collens rushed to the gate and eagerly asked, "How is Lida?"

"She is dead," replied the Judge, "and the baby rests in its mother's arms in a little graveyard in the forest."

Julia related the whole story, her father being too heart-broken to speak further on the subject.

In about a month their cousin Edwin arrived. He was indeed all that her father had represented

him, but Julia kept herself guarded while he was there. They spent many happy weeks together, attending parties and walking among the hills. Edwin said, "I wish, Julia, we were no relation to one another." She quickly replied, "But Edwin, we are cousins, and must forever be only friends." He finally departed, which greatly relieved the mind of his uncle, for well he knew it was hard to guide the heart.

The time for the next session of court arrived, and the Judge again left for the county seat. When he returned, he brought the good news to the family that there was to be a pay school opened two miles from the Hamlet, by a Mr. Ranny. The Judge had subscribed for two of his sons and Julia, and the school was to open the 1st of October. Julia was rejoiced. The school opened, and she and her two brothers went to the school-house. The teacher was a stranger to her, and upon entering, she said, "I suppose this is Mr. Ranny, I am Julia Collens."

"I am glad," said he bowing, "that my school is not to be composed of males entirely." Upon looking around he saw several young ladies in the room, but Julia had been the only one who had introduced herself. Mr. Ranny, who soon learned to love Julia, spent so much of his time in instructing her to the neglect of the rest of the pupils, that she was obliged to tell him he must do differently, or she would have to leave his school. In vain she remonstrated, and she finally concluded to leave the school, and study as best she could at home. She taught herself to

write, and wrote the first letter to her father.

The darkness of the past seemed to cast its shadows so far into the future, that each daily step seemed clouded, and while at times they would partially burst into a ray of brightness, it was only to return and deepen her sorrow. At last she said, "I believe the darkness of this world will follow me to my grave, but I shall live to look beyond, and meet the sunshine of a life which none but the rays of heaven can cast, and rest with God and his angels in the glorious city on high."

CHAPTER XX.

THE HOWARD FAMILY.

In the north of Ireland there lived a family by the name of Howard, whose home was near the city of Belfast. They were in good circumstances, and had educated three sons for the Presbyterian ministry. Being desirous to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ in the new world, the three brothers set sail together, and landed safe on the American shore. They soon made known their mission. Joseph, the eldest, was called to take charge of a small congregation in the village of Easton, Pennsylvania. He was the father of several children. He educated Everel, the eldest, as he wished him to follow the same vocation as himself. But Everel thought otherwise. He told his father that he had no taste for theology, and he would like

to learn the tailor trade. His father was shocked at the idea—Rev. Joseph Howard's son becoming a tailor? On reflection, however, he saw how foolish it would be for him to force a child to pursue a profession for which he had no taste, so he wisely gave up his cherished plans for his son. Soon Everel was busy at the tailor's bench. In one year he had learned his trade, and was ready to start in business for himself. During the year in which he was learning his trade, he paid his addresses to Miss Jennie McClure, who he asked to become his wife. Her parents consented and she became Mrs. Everel Howard, the wife of a tailor. They were quietly married by his father at the parsonage, in the presence of a few friends and relatives. After spending a few weeks among friends, they moved to Gettysburg, and he followed his trade. In one year a son gladdened the hearts of the parents. They named him Arthur. He was a bright little boy, and the joy of the household. Mr. Howard flourished in business, and remained in Gettysburg until five children were born, three sons and two daughters. He became discontented and desired to purchase some land. They moved to Allen county and settled on a farm twelve miles from Judge Collens'. Arthur was the pet of the family, and few children had minds that would compare with his. His parents were members of the Union church, and their highest ambition was to educate him for the ministry. But, like his father, he had no taste for the title of Rev. The younger sons attended to

the farming. Arthur asked his father to teach him the tailor trade.

"No, indeed," said his father, "your talent shall never be wasted at the tailor's bench."

At the time Arthur made this request of his father he was fifteen years of age, and was of a very determined disposition. He got a piece of cloth suitable for a pair of pants, and, taking a pair of scissors, a thimble, with needle and thread, he slipped out to the barn, took his own measure and, using the floor for a bench, he cut out and made himself a pair of pants. They were a perfect fit. He then put them on and went in and confronted his father.

"Who in the world made your new pants for you? They are well made and fit nicely."

"I made them," he replied.

"Who taught you to tailor?"

"I learned it by watching you," said Arthur.

His father could say no more. Arthur had the trade. He was a man in size, but only fifteen years of age. He told his parents he would go to the city of P——— and open a tailor shop of his own. They gave their consent, as they knew it was not worth while to oppose him. They advised him to be careful of his conduct, and to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

He was affable and pleasant in disposition, and being a great favorite with his comrades, they were all anxious to patronize him. Every suit he made was a success, and he soon became well established in his new business, paying for his goods in a short time. While he made money very fast

he spent most of it with his comrades, laying away but a small portion of it for the "rainy day" of his life. After being in the city two years he concluded to turn his attention to medicine, and sold his business to another tailor, returning to his father's mansion. They were much rejoiced that he was going to be a doctor. His mother worshiped him, which was really unfortunate for the young man, for he was humored so much in everything that he became domineering and so uplifted in his opinions, that soon he began to look down upon his sisters and brothers. He obtained Latin and Greek books from Esq. Harland, to whom he recited. He asked his mother for the best room in the house for a study. It was Arthur, and he must have it, although all the rest of the family were opposed to it. Their dwelling was an old-fashioned farm house, built of logs, and two stories high, with four rooms on the first floor and three on the second. The front of the house was shaded with fruit trees, interspersed with a few tall poplars. At the back, a little distance from the porches, was a small hill, at the foot of which burst forth a clear, cool spring, over which the summer house was built. This was shaded with a variety of trees, and Arthur concluded to take a seat under one of these and pursue his studies in open air, while his sisters were removing the furniture from the parlor in order to prepare it for his study. He walked four miles twice a week to recite to Esq. Harland. In one year he was prepared to study medicine. He went to Oakland and made arrangements to read with Dr. Lewis Walker. Having

a cousin—Annie Stokes—living there, he engaged a room with her, his parents agreeing to provide him with provisions. In a week he was in his study. He attended office for his preceptor when he was absent visiting his patients.

Norman Ballard one day called for the doctor, and as he was absent he waited his return. Arthur inquired his name, and then introduced himslf.

"Are you not lonesome? Are you acquainted any in Oakland?" asked Norman.

"I have no one here with whom I am acquainted but my cousin, Annie Stokes, and family," he answered.

"Would you not like to get acquainted down in our neighborhood," continued Norman; "there are Judge Collens', Esquire Wallace's, and many other very fine families I could mention."

"I should be very happy to make their acquaintance, Mr. Ballard," said Arthur.

"There is to be a party at Mr. Murray's one week from Tuesday night, and I have the honor of inviting the guests. I shall be happy to extend to you an invitation, if you will except it from a stranger."

"Thank you," said Arthur. "I shall be most happy to attend, if you think they will not consider me an intruder, for I need a little recreation, or life will become monotonous."

"I will inform the friends, then, that you are coming," said Norman, "so you need not feel embarrassed."

Just then Doctor Walker came into the office. Mr. Ballard told him he had waited for him some



time, and while so doing he had formed the acquaintance of his student Arthur Howard. "Mr. Ballard," said the doctor, "you have made the acquaintance of a very talented young man—one who can make his mark in the world, if he so desires." Norman and the doctor set out for home, while Arthur returned to his study.

On the afternoon previous to the party, Arthur dressed himself in his best suit, and walked along leisurely out to Mr. Murray's, where Norman Ballard resided. Norman introduced him to the family, who very cordially received him, addressing him as Doctor Howard. He replied that the title was too premature, as he had begun the study of medicine but a few weeks before. He was, however, addressed as Doctor A. Howard, that night, and ever after. He showed no particular preference for any of the ladies that evening, except that he danced more often with Julia Collens than any one else.

The next party was given at Judge Collens'. Of course Doctor Howard must be there, for he was quite an addition to their society, both socially and otherwise.

CHAPTER XXI.

DOCTOR HOWARD'S INTRODUCTION TO JUDGE COLLENS.

When he arrived Julia introduced him to her father and mother as young Doctor Howard,

Doctor Walker's student from Oakland. Her father received him very kindly, while her mother treated him rather coldly. During the evening some one proposed that each one should tell a story or sing a song. Doctor Howard said he preferred to sing, and selected Bonnie Doon, which he sang with much feeling. All were very attentive and quiet, and when he finished they thanked him and requested him to favor them with another, which he did singing a song entitled "Cupid." Every heart was touched as he sang the melodious strains. They did not urge him further that evening, and dancing was then in order. They served refreshments as usual, and the evening passed very pleasantly. The party adjourned at two o'clock in the morning, to meet again at Mr. Wilson's. As Doctor Howard was about to leave the house, the Judge invited him to come and see them again, and spend a few days at the Hamlet whenever he felt lonely or the time hung heavy on his hands at Oakland. He thanked him, and said he would avail himself of the opportunity. When Mrs. Collens heard the Judge invite him to come again, she said: "I don't want him to trouble us. I suppose he will be after Julia, for she always has pill-bags hanging round. I'll fix her if he comes here. She wont have an opportunity to speak to him."

Mrs. Collens had a piece of linen warped and put in the loom for the hired man to weave on rainy days, or when he was not otherwise employed. After a few weeks, Dr. Howard called to see them, and Mrs. Collens watched him quite closely. Julia came in, and her mother was not

long in discovering a good deal of attention, on the part of the Doctor, to Julia, and concluded to send Julia to weave the linen. This Julia flatly refused to do, and told her mother that was the hired man's work, and she should not do it. Leaving her mother, she walked into the parlor, this being the first time in her life she had ever rebelled against her mother's commands. Her father was very much pleased with the Doctor, and thought he was one of the most intelligent young men he had ever met. They spent the evening playing whist, and Julia enjoyed it much more than weaving linen. Her mother, seeing her efforts to accomplish her wish were likely to prove futile, went to the parlor, engaged in the game of whist, choosing the Doctor for her partner.

CHAPTER XXII.

JUDGE COLLENS RECEIVES A LETTER.

Judge Collens received a letter the next morning, from his son-in-law, Mr. Van Mert, stating that Vida could live but a few weeks longer, and that she desired to see her sisters Clara and Julia. He also stated that he wished them to come immediately, as he was obliged to move to the southern part of the State, on account of his buisness. They excused themselves to the Doctor and prepared to depart. Leaving home that afternoon, they arrived at Mr. Van Mert's the next evening

at sundown. They found Mrs. Van Mert very low, though she seemed to brighten up on their arrival. She said she was going to die and was anxious to see her sister Clara, as she wanted to make her a present of a keepsake. She had a shawl that cost one hundred dollars, and Clara had one that cost twenty-five. She wanted to give hers to Clara, and take Clara's in return. No sooner had they exchanged than Vida rued her bargain and made Clara give her's back. Mr. Van Mert looked on in sadness. He sighed and said: "Oh! that the people might witness this, that it might be a warning to them never to marry a cousin." After remaining a few days they bid Vida a last farewell, feeling and knowing that where little is given, little was required.

"It was a sad sight to see those two simple sisters part in anger," Julia said to Mr. Van Mert, as they left the room. He shook his head and made no reply. He took the shawl, and two of his wife's best dresses, with several other articles of value, put them in a small trunk for Clara, and placed them in the gig. He advised them to take a shorter road to return home, a description of which he gave them. Julia thanked him and said she would take the one he thought best. They bid him farewell, and parted, never again to meet on earth. It was in the month of January, and the weather was quite cold. The road led around the hills, which were covered with tall oaks and beach trees that towered toward the sky. The evergreen hemlock, stately and graceful, gave the forest an appearance of spring, with the exception

of a few branches being partly covered with a light snow that had begun falling. Below the road was a small stream, which went gurgling along under the ice, and truly made it a perfect winter scene. It was hard for the horse to travel, as the roads were very rough.

"It is well that we are wrapped up so carefully," said Clara, "for if we were not, we would suffer with the cold."

"Yes," said Julia, "Mr. Van Mert was very thoughtful; but I am afraid we have taken the wrong road. We will continue on until we come to a dwelling, and I will inquire."

Traveling on about one mile farther they came to a cabin, the owner of which was very kind. He invited them into the house to warm themselves, and his wife gave them a cup of strong coffee and a nice lunch. The gentleman said he would go with them a distance and put them on the right road to McCloud's hotel, which he did

"Julia," said Clara, "it is getting dark."

She looked up at the sky, and surely, there was a small dark cloud to the right of them. "Clara," said Julia, "there is that same cloud that always follows me. I fear there is something going to happen before we reach the Hamlet."

Just then they saw a light ahead. "That is the hotel, I think," said Julia.

"I hope so," replied Clara, "for I am tired riding." Sure enough, it was the hotel, and in a few moments they drove up. The landlord came out to receive them.

"Is this Mr. McCloud's?"

"It is."

"Are you acquainted with Judge Collens?"

"I am; he frequently stops here."

"We are his daughters," said Julia.

"Is that so? then you are very welcome guests indeed."

"Give proper care to our horse, if you please. I am afraid he is sick, he could scarcely travel the last mile."

They were shown to their room, and were soon invited to supper. After supper Mr. McCloud told them their horse was sick, but that he would do all he could for it. They could procure no medicines for it, as there was no drug store near. They worked all night with it; but it was of no avail, for it died in the morning.

"Clara," said Julia, "did I not tell you that the cloud we saw was an ill omen, and that something would befall us before we reached home?"

Mr. McCloud kindly loaned them a horse to go home and said he would call for the horse in a few weeks. They started on their journey. By noon they had reached the river. The ice had broken up and was floating down the stream, making it very dangerous to cross. The ferryman said he would take them across if they insisted upon it. Julia said she was willing to try, but Clara was a little timid. The ferryman said he thought perhaps that by using spike poles to push away the floating ice, they might be able to cross. The horse and gig were placed upon the boat, and all went safely over. They reached home at 3 o'clock. They told their father of the misfortune of losing their

horse, and he said, "I am glad my daughters are alive; the horse I can spare. It was not so precious as my daughters."

CHAPTER XXIII.

VIDA VAN MERT'S DEATH—DR. HOWARD WINS JULIA.

Mr. Van Mert moved to his new home and in six weeks after, Vida's spirit took its flight, and her remains were laid in a strange graveyard, under a neat tombstone which marked the spot.

Dr. Howard attended all the parties and became a favorite with all the young ladies. Some sought to win his heart, while others only desired and liked his company. But he had determined in his own mind to win Julia Collens for his wife, and he became a coustant visitor at the Judge's. He had great conversational powers and a retentive memory, which made him ready to debate on any subject. This pleased the Judge, and the doctor soon won favor with him. His musical talent was very fine, and he would entertain them for hours with his songs. Mrs. Collens tried often to provoke Julia by saying that if she married Dr. Howard she would have to live on "Bonnie Doon." He, however, progressed so rapidly in his studies, that in another year he would receive his diploma, which would make him a full-fledged doctor of medicine. He now ventured to ask Julia to become his wife, after he became a practicing physician. She promised to give him an answer when

he made his next call, which was to be in four weeks. Her mother sent her out to direct the boys to break flax, thinking in that way of doing she could keep her out of Dr. Howard's company, but all to no purpose, as he accompanied her. She then ordered Clara to make mush for supper, but the Judge overhearing her command, stepped out and said:

"Clara, you can make mush for your mother, but get a nice supper for the rest of the family, who do not prefer mush." And Clara as a matter of course obeyed her father. Mrs. Collens found herself defeated on every hand, but said she would yet be victorious. The doctor left after supper.

The next morning Julia asked her father to take a walk with her. They went to the spot which he had selected as his last resting-place, and seating themselves on a log, she said, "Father, Dr. Howard has asked me to become his wife, and I am to give him an answer when he next visits the Hamlet."

The Judge looked steadily at his daughter, and then said, "Do you love him, Julia?"

"I do, father," she said.

"I dislike to lose my favorite," continued he, "but he is your choice. I expect to end my days with you, and as I know of no young man whom I would prefer, I give my full consent. Your mother would consent to no one whom you would choose, and I leave the rest to your own judgment andfeelings."

They then returned to the Hamlet.

At the end of four weeks the doctert came,

welcomed by all but Julia's mother. In the afternoon they went for a ride, when he asked her if she had made up her mind to become Mrs. Howard.

"I have, trusting that I will have a kind and affectionate husband," she said.

"May my right hand be severed from my arm, and I be struck dumb, if I misuse you in any way. Your lot has been hard enough, and I look forward to the time when that dark cloud of which you have so often spoken will be removed."

This was his vow.

"Are you not trusting too much in your own strength, without thinking of that higher power that rules our destiny, that says, 'Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall?'"

He replied, "I think my common sense would teach me to be kind to my partner in life, lest she should cease to love me." Dr. Howard said further that the wedding day would perhaps be in the distant future, as he did not want to take the bird until he could furnish a cage suitable to keep it in.

For several weeks there was a heavy rainfall, in which the Judge was caught, while on his way home from court. It laid him up with a severe attack of rheumatism, and Julia was his constant attendant. Dr. Howard was absent from the Hamlet for six months. This was by mutual agreement, in order for both to decide whether being separated for any length of time would make any difference in their love for one another. But the old adage, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder," proved true in their case, and she received a letter from him stating that he would arrive home the

next week. She informed her father of the doctor's intention, and he was pleased to hear that he was to return again.

CHAPTER XXIV.

JULIA ENCOUNTERS THE ROBBER.—SHE DISLOCASES HER WRIST.

The Judge was convalescing. He called Julia to him and said, "There are three hundred dollars of public money that must be delivered to General Logan, who lives in Lewistow, Ohio, fifty miles distant. I am not able to go, so I will be obliged to entrust it ro you. It is a lonely road to travel, and is mostly tdrough the woodland. You are a brave girl, and I know you will take it and save your father's honor· You will have to start to-morrow morning at sunrise, when I will give you a pistol, which you are not to use, unless in self-defense. Take some assafœtida to throw to in case they should cross your path; but I do not apprehend any danger from them, as the hunters are killing them of."

He then tied up the silver in two bunches and put one in each side of the saddle-bags, and charged her in particular to stay over night at an inn or hotel called the Half-way house. The morning of Julia's departure arrived, and looking out to see what the prospect of the weather for the day was, she saw the sun rising in all his glory

and not a cloud to be seen. There was a balmy breeze blowing, which caused the wheat fields to wave gently before it. The corn was beginning to tassel, and the flowers were blooming on every hand. With her long riding whip in her hand, she sallied forth on her father's mission. When she reached the river, the sun was two hours high; she sat on the back of faithful Sunflower, and beckoned for the ferryman, who waved his hat to let her know that he saw her. The boat arrived and she was safely piloted across when she took the road that led into the woods. Some portions of it she found level and some very hilly. How lonely she felt in that desolate forest, none but her own heart could tell, and as she rode along a thousand thoughts crowded her brain as to what might happen to her; if danger should come who was there to rescue? The wild woods answered, none She examined her pistol and found it all right. The nimble squirrel hopping from branch to branch, rustling the leaves, startled her. Now and then a rabbit would cross the road, but no human form did she see. After riding along for several hours she heard the report of a gun and the barking of a hound; in an instant two wolves crossed the path in great haste a few rods ahead of her, with two hounds following close at their heels. Presently a hunter came up. Oh, how glad she was; she asked if there was any danger of her coming in contact with the wolves.

"No," he replied, "there were but two, and the dogs and I will soon finish them."

This quieted her fears and she rode along several

miles thinking of home and her future life. She looked at the sun and turning her horse due north and south, she found that their shadows fell directly in front of them, hence it must be near 12 o'clock. Turning into the woods, she got off from her horse and fed him by placing a cloth on the ground, taking some oats from the saddle bags and pouring them on the cloth. She then took her lunch and sat down to eat her dinner, while Sunflower was leisurely munching his oats. After finishing the repast, she again started on her journey. She had gone but a short distance when a man rode out of the woods and accosted her. The jostling of the horse had loosened the string that tied the silver sack, and the coins were rattling in the saddle-bags. He impudently asked her what that was he heard jingling in the saddle-bag, and she replied that it sounded like a surveyor's chain.

"Ladies do not often carry them," he said.

"My father is sick and I have to attend to his business," said she.

"You are a brave young lady to travel in this way alone," he said.

Just then they came to a spring. He asked Julia to alight and have a drink, which she declined to do, as she had come to the conclusion that he had bad intentions. He took a drink and again mounted his horse, and riding up to her side, he laid his hand upon the horn of her saddle. She told him to remove it at once, and as he paid no attention to her command, she drew her riding whip and brought it down over his hand with full force. He then removed it, saying:

"My young lady you are quite a tigress," and riding on a little farther stopped his horse and dismounted, at the same time commanding her to follow suit. Instead of obeying him she drew her pistol from her side and pointed it at him.

"Don't shoot!" he said in terror.

She replied :

"I will if you molest me further."

As luck would have it, a wagon was coming not far distant, plainly visible. The man noticed it as well as Julia, and putting spurs to his horse rode into the woods and was out of sight. When she met the wagon she related what had happened to her, and the driver told her that it was certainly a robber. He told her that she was not far from the Half-way house, and advised her to put up there for the night, She thanked him, and, riding on but a short distance, arrived at the Half-way house. Frightened and weary she put her saddle-bags and money into the landlord's hand, and told him of her adventure. He said at once that he would send an escort with her to General Logan's in the morning, as he did not think it was safe for her to go alone She felt thankful that she found a friend among strangers, and upon retiring she kneeled down at her bedside and thanked God for the protection from the danger which had threatened her. The landlord sent his son with her the remainder of the way. She handed the money to General Logan, and the next day they returned to the Half-way house. Mr. Montville was very kind to her, and said his son should accompany her nearly all the way home. Julia placed five dollars in his

hand, saying she would be glad of his company, for she was afraid to go alone.

The next morning they started. When they were within five miles of the river she told him that he need not go any farther, but he insisted on going with her, and said he would remain over night with a friend. She was very much pleased, as a matter of course. They had not gone but a little way when Sunflower became frightened by the rustling of something in the leaves, and suddenly jumping threw Julia to the ground, dislocating her wrist. She was well enough informed on such matters to know that it must be set before it began to swell, so taking some loose bark from a tree, she told the young man to hold her hand, while she pulled the wrist in place. She then put bark on each side of her arm for splints, and bound it up with her handkerchief. After again assisting her upon her horse Mr. Montville accompanied her to the river, where they called a doctor. He said it was well done, and that she deserved the credit of a surgeon. He, however, removed the bark and put on splints, after which he bound it with muslin. It did not take him long to do this, and while it was very painful, she was thankful it was no worse. Placing her arm in a sling he gave her a stimulant to keep up her strength. She said she could reach home quite comfortable, and that her father would call and settle the bill when he came to the river on his way to court. Dr. Lamson said:

"I shall make no charge. I am glad to have the pleasure of doing so brave a girl a favor.

Give my respects to your father, and I wish you a safe journey home."

Twilight was fast disappearing as the Doctor assisted her on her horse and she started down to the river. The moon, resplendent in her beauty, shone down upon the water, casting its reflections from shore to shore, like that of a mirror. The ferry man advised her to remain on her horse and he would assist her to get on the boat. The scenery by moonlight was magnificent, and as she gazed at the wonderful beauty of nature, she thought, "who of us can deny there is a God," when she knew that it was not in the power of man to cast those shadows. She left the boat in safety, and taking the road which ascended the hill, she was soon in sight of the Hamlet. The road being dotted with farm houses, removed all her fears. At 8 o'clock P. M. she reached the Hamlet gate. Her father was standing in the door, watching for her, as he had been very uneasy from the time she left home. When she reached the door her father caught her in his arms, not noticing that her arm was in a sling. He said:

"I am so glad you have returned. I have been very uneasy about you ever since you left."

"Be thankful, father, for I am home all right, with the exception of a broken wrist."

She was hungry, and said she would give them a history of her trip after supper. Supper was soon on the table, and after supper she related her adventure, which made her appear quite a heroine in the eyes of all, even her mother.

Her wrist slowly mended. Dr. Howard arrived

at the time he had intended, and Mrs. Collens said it was rather lucky for Julia to dislocate her wrist, as she could now entertain Dr. Howard. This, of course, was intended for a slur on poor Julia, as usual. They concluded that the separation of six months had but bound the tie of love more closely, and their meeting was a happy one. Yet, while Julia loved Dr. Howard, she loved her father dearly, and had often thought how hard it would be to make up her mind to marry and leave him alone. She knew she was his sole comfort, and he had often begged of her not to marry any one as long as he was living. However, if she felt that she would prefer to become Mrs. Howard, he desired that before she took the step, she would visit his father's family, concluding his remarks by saying: "Roses often blossom among thorns."

Julia seeing how her father felt, determined to at least accept part of the advice, to visit his people, and accordingly after he came home she informed him of the feelings of her father. She told him she knew it would break her father's heart to have her leave him, and therefore she could make the sacrifice and would release him of his engagement. She was in delicate health and she wished him to get some one who would be worthy of him, and who had health to assist him in reaching the top round of the ladder. He said he was willing and very anxious to have her visit his parents, and that his sister Leona would attend the next party at Rolland's Cove. She would then give her an invitation to accompany her home, and he hoped she would accept it. He

very obligingly said he would relinquish her for the present, and hoped she would think better of it; but he continued, "This is a hard stroke for me, and I do hope you will change your mind."

The party came off at the appointed time. Julia's arm was well, though weak. She was introduced to his sister by one of the company, as Doctor Howard was not present. She gave Julia an invitation to spend a couple of weeks with them, which she accepted. Leona informed her that her brother would not be at home. After returning from the party she told her father that she would visit the Howards the next month, before cold weather set in; but she did not tell him of the freedom she had given the doctor in releasing him from his engagement.

CHAPTER XXV.

JULIA VISITS THE HOWARDS—BLACK TOM'S ADVICE.

At the appointed time she set out for Mr. Howard's and was gladly received. She found them a very religious people, though their son apparently was not. His mother praised her son continually, and he seemed to be without a fault in her eyes, feeling and acting at times as though he were an emperor. Julia tried to learn something of his disposition, but no disclosures were made. When she returned home she informed her father that the Howards made a very nice appearance, and she was pleasantly entertained, but the doctor was not at home.

The doctor in due time finished his studies and received his degree, after which he began practice with his preceptors. In the meantime Mrs. Collens was continually ill-treating Julia. She and her father were sitting on the back porch, when they noticed a heavy storm approaching from the north-west. It was late in the fall but quite warm. Black Tom, Mr. Willson's slave, stepped on the porch, and bowing, said: "How de do, Massa Judge and Missy Julia? De heat am very fasicatin to-day."

"Very warm. Take a seat, Tom," said the Judge. "I think we are going to have a storm."

"Dat was what I tink, so I come onto de porch. Missy Julia, dey says you am gwine to marry Massa Doctor Howard. I wish you let dat lone and marry Massa Carol. We culled folks want you fo' a mistress."

"You are selfish, Tom, are you not?" said Julia.

"Ise mighty little selfish. But mind, 'Black Tom,' sees in de right light, if he am a slave," he answered.

"What fault do you find with the doctor, Tom?" she continued.

"Oh, he am so impo'tant. He tink nobody knows anyting but hissef. You takes a man ob his style, and he makes a hard massa to a slave, a hard husban' to a wife, and wuss dan all, cruel to de chillen. Massa Dr. Howard is smart, any nigga knows dat. But watch de cloud on his brow when he is 'posed to anyting."

"Tom, you have been studying human nature, have you not?"

"Yes, Missy Julia, Tom has, an' he hab de bes' ob 'vantages. You see so many folks come to Massa Willson's, an' da is ob all kinds. Dere is de high toned, an' de middle toned, an' de low toned, an' de no tone at all," said Tom laughing. "I tell you, Missy Julia, de way to find out de disposition ob the man am to try de heart, de tempa, an' de purse. If a gal fin's dat he is high tempered, hard hearted, an' de string tied roun' de purse, I 'vise de gal to let him 'lone. No matter 'bout his tone."

The Judge said, "You are about right, Tom."

The storm was slowly creeping towards them. The thunder began to mutter, and the clouds, rising higher and higher, passed over one another until they resembled the great rolling waves of the sea. The sight was one of grandeur. Presently the rain began to fall, increasing in force till it poured down in torrents. The little rivulets were swollen to twice their size, and overflowing the meadows for miles, while the fruit which was not picked was blown down and scattered in a very promiscuous manner over the ground. Everything was refreshed by the shower. The birds were singing their last song for the season, as it was late and they would have to seek a warmer climate.

Supper was announced, and Tom arose to go, when the Judge invited him to remain and have some supper.

"Thank you, Massa Collens, I believe I will," said Tom, resuming his seat on the porch.

The family seated themselves around the table.

The Judge remarked, "Tom has a wise head on him. He is not more than twenty years old, and if he were educated he would compare favorably with some of our white gentlemen. The remarks he made to-day show an intelligent mind, Julia."

"I often think how hard it is for the colored people to be kept in slavery," said Julia. "They have minds to think and hearts to feel, as well as the white race. Look at Lizzie. See how she walked the deck of the boat with her babe clasped to her breast and made that fearful leap into the river, drowning herself and child, rather than be sold into slavery. Father, don't you think the slaves in America will be made free before many years?"

"I do, my child. I think they will be a free people before the end of this century; but it will be done by war."

Mrs. Collens here remarked that she hoped they would be, for she liked and pitied them. Having finished their supper they left the table, and Tom came in and Julia gave him a seat, remaining to wait upon him. Tom said, "Missy Julia, I t'ink dis am a luscious digest. A pusson gets tired ob de food dey hab in de nigga quatas."

"I suppose they do, Tom," she said, "but I hope the time is coming when the colored people will have the same fare as the whites. But I want them to settle by themselves. I don't believe in amalgamation."

"What is dat, Missy Julia?"

"Blacks marrying whites."

"I don't, either," said Tom, "but dey malagate

widout marrying, Missy Julia. Taft, my fadder, was a white man; an' lots ob de odder niggas down at de quata hab white fadders. Dis I know from my own eyes an' obduration."

"I know it, Tom," said Julia. "The only way to stop it is to free the slaves and have them settle by themselves in colonies."

"You are right, Missy Julia; dat strikes me perzackly."

Tom rose from the table and thanked Julia, saying he would like to hear her lecture again some time, as he left for home.

Julia assisted Clara to do up the evening work, and then went into the library where her father was reading and took a seat, and opening a political conversation, she asked her father whom he preferred for President. He replied, "I prefer John Quincy Adams, for he is the man for right."

"And I prefer General Jackson, for he is the man for fight," said Julia.

"Why, how now, my little Quakeress? I thought you did not believe in fighting," said he.

"I am not a Quakeress, father, though I believe the Quakers are a good, moral class of people. I believe in fighting when it is necessary, and that is what Jackson will do—fight for the good of his country," said Julia.

Her father remarked that Adams was the wiser statesman. "Well, time will tell," said Julia, "as they will both probably fill the Presidential chair. Then we can judge."

CHAPTER XXVI.

ADA VISITS HOME—THE GAME OF CARDS.

Just then there was a bustling noise at the door, and the subject was dropped. Mr. Glassgo and Ada had come, and they were very glad to see them. They remained a week, and Julia often heard Ada and her mother in close conversation, but when she came near they would stop. Mr. Glassgo was very pleasant and attentive to the Judge, and Ada was very kind to Julia, to all outward appearance. Mr. Ballard had informed Julia that Dr. Howard had spent his vacation at Mr. Glassgo's and the Wallace's. The report was, that Dr. Howard had engaged himself to Jane Wallace. Julia almost hoped it might be true, but did not believe it. Shortly after, she heard Mr. Glassgo tell her father never to give his consent for Julia to marry the doctor. Julia had now struck the key-note. This was what Ada and her mother were whispering about. She knew it all now, and could see that they had picked the doctor for their own advantage. Julia decided to leave home for a few weeks, to visit with a family by the name of Leonard, who were old friends of her mother, and resided about thirty miles from Judge Collens. When she arrived at the Leonard mansion, to her great surprise it was Dr. Howard who came to assist her from her horse. He was attending Mr. Leonard's daughter Anna. He was very glad to see her, and immediately began his pleading for the renewal of their engagement.

She told him she had heard that he was engaged to Jane Wallace, but he emphatically denied the charge. She thought of what black Tom had said, and it all crowded through her brain in a moment. But there he was pleading and urging her to accept him, and with his magnetic influence backed up by her mother's unkindness, she consented to renew the engagement, though she said it against her better judgment. Time passed very pleasantly, and, at the end of a few weeks, she returned to the Hamlet. She found upon entering the home, that her father was absent attending court. She thought to herself: "How strange that I should meet the doctor in such an unexpected place. It seems as though it was indeed foreordained that I should be his wife. I am glad I kept the secret of our separation."

The Judge returned after the adjournment of court, and Dr. Howard arrived the same evening. During the evening the Judge invited the doctor to play a game of euchre, two handed. During the play the doctor turned the right bower seven times in succession. The Judge, becoming very much excited, said: "Doctor, you have cheated me."

"Oh, no, Judge, it was the run of the cards."

This did not, however, allay his excitement, and he said, "Doctor, if you will own that you cheated me, we may yet be friends; if not, our friendship ceases, and I have played the last game of cards I shall ever play with you." The doctor said he could not own to a lie and he was certainly innocent of the charge. The Judge by this

time had become so excited that he threw down the deck of cards with a slam upon the table, saying, "It is finished."

All this time Julia watched the doctor closely. He kept perfectly calm, and she thought, what a good disposition he had, for that would try the temper of anyone. Ada and Mr. Glassgo were still with them, and hearing the dispute came in, followed by Mrs. Collens. Dr. Howard explained the case as best he could, and said he was not guilty of the accusation. Dr. Howard was shown to his room, and retired early, but not to sleep. The balance of the family, with the exception of Julia, who had retired, sat up to a late hour talking. Morning came, and the doctor rose early and called for his horse, telling Julia he did not feel as though he could remain longer under the circumstances. The Judge came out while he and Julia were talking, and insisted on his remaining to breakfast, which he did. Very few words were spoken during the time he remained, and after breakfast he left, first telling Julia that this should make no difference between them, and he would always be true to her, and he hoped they would soon become reconciled, as he thought his better judgment would prevail when his temper cooled down. He said good-bye, and rode off.

Mr. Glassgo and Ada had been out for the day, and had returned a few minutes before the disagreement over the cards, and Julia did not know they were in the house until they made their appearance in the parlor. The next day she tried to make peace between her father and the doctor,

but without success. Mr. Glassgo, Ada and her mother had built up a wall the night before which could not be broken down.

The next day they all received an invitation to attend the wedding of Carol Willson, which was to take place the following evening, which was Christmas. He was to marry Tillie Devallard, and the wedding was to take place at the residence of his father. The Judge's family all attended, the marriage ceremony being performed by the Rev. Mr. McMullen. Julia wished the bride and groom many happy days together, for she was a warm friend of both. And after spending the time pleasantly until a late hour, they returned to the Hamlet.

The next morning at the breakfast table, Mrs. Collens said, "Julia, you see what you have missed by not marrying Carol Willson. You would have pleased both families. But I suppose you will take Dr. Howard and live on 'Bonny Doon,'—that will be cheap living, and you will probably get rich."

"I might possibly marry a Glassgo, then my parents can keep me, which would be cheaper still," said Julia.

That was rather a rub on her mother, for she knew that she had persuaded Ada to marry the man she did against her will, and that she was unhappy.

Dr. Howard wrote Julia letters, and sent them by private conveyance, and Julia answered in the same way. Weeks rolled by and Dr. Howard did not come to the Hamlet. Rollie, Julia's eldest

brother, informed her that Norman Ballard was married to Miss Lizzie Leach, and the report was that under unfortunate circumstances he had married in haste. Julia said she was sorry, for she thought, with a suitable wife, Norman could have been reformed. The next news was, that Jane Wallace had married Rev. William Erwin, and had moved to Ohio. She began to feel quite lonely, as her associates were going, one by one, and settling down in life. Months rolled by, and her circumstances remained the same.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE JUDGE'S LETTER TO JULIA—HER MARRIAGE TO DOCTOR HOWARD.

As she frequently did, Julia one day bent her footsteps toward a favorite retreat in the wood near the house to meditate and pray. At this time Judge Collens was busy in his library, writing to Julia the following letter:

"MY DEAR CHILD: I write you this letter to inform you that I am going from home, to be absent ten days. If you ever marry Dr. Howard you must do so before I return. If upon my return I find you at the Hamlet, I shall then consider that you have made me the solemn promise never to become his wife during my lifetime. If on receiving this letter you are determined to become his wife, you can have no further claim on me. I

shall count you as dead, and my property shall go to my other heirs. On the other hand, if you remain with me you shall have a large share of my estate. Your father will go to his grave in sorrow if you leave him, for he has always worshiped his Julia. From your affectionate father,

"Farewell! ROLLAND COLLENS."

Julia heard footsteps stirring in the leaves. It was a chilly day, and she had been sitting in the chilly air, so intent upon the thoughts which were constantly crowding her mind, that she had not noticed anyone approaching. She looked up, and her father confronted her. "Why are you out here this cold day?" he asked.

She replied, "It is cold everywhere, father. The fever of my mind keeps me as warm here as in the house." Stepping down he kissed her, and placing the letter in her hand retraced his steps to the house where Quin had the gig ready, and he immediately started on his journey. After her father had gone she broke the seal and read the contents of the letter. Tears flowed thick and fast. It was a hard thing to decide between a man whom she loved and her father, but she decided in favor of her father, and returning home she went to the library and wrote to Doctor Howard of her father's letter and his absence from home, and told him that unless he became reconciled with her father, she could never become his wife. She sealed the letter and sent it to the doctor by her brother Rollie. After he had gone with the message Mrs. Collens told Julia she must go to the store at Brookville, five miles in the op-

posite direction to do some trading for her. Julia put on her black crape dress, with her riding habit over it. When she arrived at Brookville and went into the store there was Doctor Howard. She told him she had sent him a letter, and repeated its contents. He said:

"Julia Collens, I will never give you up. If I do it, it will be my ruin. Let us go at once to Esq. Harland's and have the ceremony performed; your father will then relent and take you home."

"Will you promise me, Dr. Howard, that you will do all in your power to bring about a reconciliation, if I become your wife?" she asked.

"I make you that solemn promiss," he replied.

He talked a little longer, and love being heaviest in the scales weight, he persuaded her, and they drove immediately to Esq. Harland, and were made man and wife. Before Julia left the store she purchased the articles for her mother, and the merchant said he would send them to her and inform her of Julia's marriage. Dr. Howard took his wife to his home that evening, and his parents most heartily welcomed her as their child. Nothing was too good for Arthur's wife. She told them she married him against the wishes of her parents, that her mother never liked him, and that her father had taken a dislike to him on account of a game of euchre which he had played with him. The doctor returned next day to Oakland to attend to practice, and to make arrangements to dissolve partnership with Dr. Walker, as they intended to move to Salon, Ohio. Julia was anxious for his return, as she was sure

he would see her father and get his forgiveness. The doctor did not return for two weeks, and during his absence her mother-in-law told her that she would pity her if she had to live such a life with the doctor as she had done all her married life with Mr. Howard.

"Why, what do you mean?" asked Julia, in great surprise.

"I mean that the doctor has an ungovernable temper, so have all the rest of the children, but Adaline," she answered.

"Why, you all seemed so very amiable when I was visiting here. I thought you a model family," said Julia.

"They did well to govern their tempers when you were here. If you had remained longer there would have been an outburst."

"Mother," said Julia, "why did you not tell me of the doctor's disposition?"

"Because I wished you to become his wife. I thought that with your amiable disposition you might improve him, therefore I kept the curtain down, and placed no obstacle in the way," she answered.

Julia's heart sank, and fresh proof of the truth of Mrs. Howard's words showed itself daily. Adaline came rushing in saying, "Lewis is whipping the horse to death." His mother ran out to try to stop him, but the more she talked, the more angry he grew. Julia stepped up to him, and said, "Lewis, you are but fourteen years old; govern your temper while you are young, for if you do not, in future life it will be-

come master of you." With this he calmed down, for he was ashamed that Julia had seen him. The girls were constantly disagreeing. Two weeks rolled away. They were long weeks for poor Julia. The doctor finally arrived, and Julia met him, and throwing her arms around his neck she sobbed like a child, and asked, "Have you seen my father; has he forgiven us?"

"I have not seen him, and have not made any effort to see him. After I left you I thought the matter over and felt that I was not to blame, and that it was your father's place to ask my forgiveness."

"As the matter stands now, it is your place. Through a solemn promise to do all in your power to bring about a reconciliation between us, you obtained his daughter for a wife," said Julia.

He said he spoke under a state of excitement; that if he had taken time to think he would not have made the promise; and besides, he did not care to have his wife's love divided between another and himself, even if it was her father.

"May my right hand be severed from my body, and may I be stricken dumb if I misuse you in any way," said Julia. "When you tread upon the heart it is the worst usage you can give; and if this is my first lesson may the grave soon be my bed, and the grass soon cover it from sight."

She touched a chord in her husband's heart. "Look up, Julia, and forgive me for being so unkind," he said, and, woman-like, she forgave him, though she did not forget. She thought again of the wise sayings of black Tom and of

her father. Ah! that she could but see him and twine her arms about his neck and be forgiven. They went to their room, and the doctor told her the articles she had bought for her mother arrived safe at the Hamlet, and that the message telling of their marriage had been delivered. He also told her that he and Dr. Walker had dissolved partnership, and that in two weeks they would move to Salon, Ohio. That evening Rollie arrived with this brief note:

"Mrs. Dr. Howard:—Your household effects will be sent to Limons' Corners next Tuesday, where you can receive them. Accompanying the goods you will find the price in money of Sunflower, as I do not wish to part with him. Though the rider is gone I still treasure the horse.

"Respectfully,

"ROLLAND COLLENS."

This was too much for Julia. She burst into tears, and wept as though her heart would break, finally fainting away. Her husband gave her restoratives, but it was a long time before she recovered her senses. Rollie remained several days with her. He told her that when her father came home and learned that she was married, he acted like a raving maniac. After a time he cooled down, and went through the house as though he was hunting something he had lost. She said: "Rollie, when you go home, kiss him for me, and tell him Julia loves him yet, and always will until death, although we may never meet again on earth." She kissed him good-bye, and felt that she had seen the last of her father's family, when

Rollie's form was out of sight. She retired, but slept none that night. She recalled the words which she had spoken to Carol Willson on the subject of marriage: "I will try to make a wise choice. Then if I fail, I will be a martyr to my fate. I may get a blank." She began to feel that she had been deceived, but she decided to make the best of it. She saw that her parents' turning away from her was going to make her husband more unkind, as he had her entirely in his power. He loved her as well as such a selfish man could, and he was proud of her, but he only gathered the flower for the pleasure it gave him. He valued her so far as she added to his comfort, and he gloated over the object he had won, because he had gained the hand that others could not claim, though they were far more worthy. She felt that she was in a lion's den, and that her keeper was very likely to be ever unkind to her. She again returned to her room, closed the door, and asked her Heavenly Father to enable her to bear her cross; and that if she had ever in this world to live under a cloud and her sky be darkened, would he not receive her into the kingdom of heaven? The spirit seemed to whisper, "Yes, strive on." She had left the room more cheerful than she had entered it. She thought this world is but a little to endure; then, oh, that glorious eternity in heaven. Supper was announced, and Dr. Howard took his wife by the arm and led her to the table. She looked pale and sad, and her mother, Mrs. Howard, shed tears, for her conscience smote her. She knew she had told the

tale too late. The love and pride she had for her son conquered her duty, and she allowed the frail flower to be caught in his net. Next day Lewis took the wagon, and went to the corners for the goods, bringing also the money her father had given her for Sunflower.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

JULIA MOVES TO SALON.—BIRTH OF MIRTIE.—THE JOURNEY WEST.

Lewis returned safe, and next day they started for Salon, Lewis driving the team, with Julia sitting by his side, while the doctor rode his own horse. Dr. Howard had bought the practice of Dr. Dunfield, the man who murdered William Collens, a cousin of Julia's father, some years before, and they were to move into his house. As they neared the river, Julia broke out afresh in a flood of tears. She thought how many times she had crossed it, sometimes with her father and sometimes alone, and that perhaps she was now crossing it for the last time, and, under the circumstances, she thought she should have no desire to again cross it. It was but a short journey; they reached their destination that night at 12 o'clock. They were all very tired, and Dr. Dunfield received them kindly, and had a warm supper prepared for them by his housekeeper. Mrs. Howard felt a repugnance toward him, as she

knew she was shaking hands with the man who had killed her favorite cousin, by stabbing him in the back during a political dispute. His request was, that if he died he did not want the law enforced. He intended to fight a duel with the doctor, should he recover, and after his death the doctor was not molested by the law for the crime he had committed. When he sold out to Doctor Howard, he agreed not to begin practice again in the village, and, after remaining two days with them, he left Dr. Howard in possession. Dr. Dunfield then moved to the upper part of the village, and continued to practice, and, as they had made no special agreement in writing, Doctor Howard could not prosecute him. However, the latter soon had a very good practice, and, in the meantime, Mr. Glassgo and Ada moved to the same village. Julia thought they came as spies, to ascertain whether she was happy or not. Julia was a mother in a little less than a year, having a little daughter born to her, which they named Mirtilla, giving her the pet name Mirtie. She grew to be a bright, loving little child, and her father worshiped her. As soon as she was old enough to be taken from home, he took her on the horse with him, when he went to visit his patients. Yet while he loved and petted his child, he was unkind to his wife, though not in the presence of strangers. She and her sister, Mrs. Glassgo, were very intimate, but Julia never dropped a word or look of her husband's unkindness. After practicing three years in Salon, Dr. Howard concluded to leave the field to Dr. Dunfield, as there was not practice

enough for both at that place, and move farther west. He had received a letter from an old Dr. Beaumont, who desired him to come to Springfield, Ohio, and form a partnership with him. Julia did all in her power to have him accept the offer, but in vain. He said they would go to Wartell, where her half brother, Charles Collens, resided, and then he would look for a situation. Julia was growing tired of being a physician's wife, as she had to make out most of the prescriptions, and this, with the care of her house, was too much for her delicate health. Accordingly, they packed up their household goods, bought a small wagon, and, placing Julia as driver with Mirtie beside her on the seat, while he walked and drove the cow, they started on their journey. Her sister Ada seemed to feel terribly when her sister left. She said: "O! Julia, I wish you and father would become friends before you leave."

Julia replied.

"Ada, you helped to build up the wall, but you cannot pull it down, but I forgive you, and must now say farewell!"

Mrs. Howard was in very delicate health to be jostled along over the hills and through the woods without a star of hope ahead, but they finally reached safely her brother's in Wartell. He was the only one of the first eight children of Judge Collens that was intelligent. He did his best to induce Dr. Howard to begin the practice of medicine at that place, so that his sister might be near him, but it was of no avail. The doctor heard of a new settlement, and when he arrived he found two houses erected.

He selected a piece of ground, and built a log room which he intended to use as a stable whenever he should build a house, but for the time being this was to be their dwelling. It had no fire-place, and only a hole in the roof for the smoke to escape from. He returned to Wartell for his family. When Mrs. Howard arrived at her new home she was shocked to find only one room, and that without a chimney, and no floor but the earth. The furniture was soon arranged, and the doctor told her to make the best of it, and that in two months they would have a new house. She had often heard of pioneer life, but never expected to experience it. They retired early that night, for they were very tired. It was really a novelty to be sleeping in a log cabin in the woods. Julia offered up her prayer in that lonely cabin the same as she did in her father's Hamlet. The more trouble she had the more need she had of prayer. They were all wrapped in a slumber when their sleep was broken by a sharp peal of thunder. Peal upon peal rent the air, while the lightning flashed in great sheets, and the wind rose to a perfect hurricane. Crash! crash! went the timber around the log cabin. Julia clung to her child, expecting every moment to be crushed to death. The doctor trembled. The rain poured in torrents; the wind again increased and off went the thatch roof of their cabin. It was raised in the air, and part of it came down across their bed, forming a shelter. The feather bed which Julia had put over them that night saved them from injury. The storm continued until almost morning; hail took the place of rain, mak-

ing it more terrible, but the roof falling across the bed saved them from getting wet. In the morning the sky was clear, and not a vestige of the darkness of the night before was to be seen. The houses of their neighbors were not injured by the storm. They came early and lifted the roof from the doctor's bed, and concluded that Providence had indeed been kind to them, as none had received any injuries. The next day the doctor procured hands and commenced his dwelling. It was a frame building two stories high, with two rooms on each floor. In two months it was finished sufficiently to occupy; they moved into it, and Julia began to feel brighter, for she had at last got a home.

CHAPTER XXIX.

BIRTH OF ARDEELA—MIRTIE'S DEATH.

The following week another daughter was ushered into this "wearisome world," whom they named Ardeela. Mirtie by this time was three years old. The citizens had named their village Onoco, and there being a great deal of sickness in that part of the country, the doctor was kept very busy. Mirtie was an extraordinary child, being very intelligent for one of her years. She would converse with her father on different subjects, bake the pancakes for her mother, and take care of Ardeela when her mother was busy. Her father was cruel to her in some things. He would not allow her to go out doors to play, not that it would do her

any harm, but that he wanted to show her that he was master. Mirtie would sometimes forget and would step out, when he would punish her severly, almost breaking her mother's heart. Mr. Long, the carpenter who built the doctor's house, would say: "Mirtie, who made these boards?"

"God made them," she would answer.

He would say, "But God did not saw them."

"I know that, Mr. Long, but He made the trees that the boards were sawed from," she replied.

"You are right, Mirtie; now who made you, can you tell me?"

"Yes, God made me."

"How do you know that God made you?"

"Because God made everything. He made papa Doctor Howard, so now, then, Mr. Long, you know it, Mirtie must go in the house," and off she would run.

Her mother taught her to pray, and she wonld often hear her mother say, "Lord, do Thou enable me to bear my trials." Dr. Howard had been scolding her mother that morning because she had made the pills too large to suit him, and of course went off to see his patients leaving his wife crying.

When he returned Mirtie put her arms around his neck and said, "Doctor papa Howard, I prayed while you were away that you would not scold mamma any more." This melted the doctor into tears, and for a long time he was quite kind to his wife. Ardeela he never liked. A short time after this occured Mirtie and Ardeela were both stricken down with that terrible disease, scarlet fever. The neighbors being afraid of the disease kept away

from them, and the parents had all the care of the children. She had not had her clothing off for sixty days and nights, except to change them. The children suffered greatly. One day the doctor mixed some medicine for them, and his wife begged of him not to give it to them, or at least not more than half of it, telling him if he did he would kill them. He turned to her, poured half of it into another glass and bade her give it to Ardeela, saying he knew how to attend children without her interference. Mirtie said, "Papa, give it to me, I will take it," and suiting the action with the word she snatched the contents. Meanwhile Mrs. Howard threw out the medicine that was in the cup, and quickly dipping up some water she gave it to Ardeela. All this took the attention of the poor mother, and upon turning to look at Mirtie she saw she had breathed her last without a struggle.

Dr. Howard screamed, "I have killed my child! I have killed my Mirtie!" He walked the floor like a mad man, telling his wife she must not disclose it, or he would be a ruined man. "And if you do," said he, "it will be at your own peril."

Mrs. Howard was glad that Mirtie was at rest, and almost wished that the angels would claim Ardeela, and take her from her tyrant father. Yet she was heart-broken to think Dr. Howard was the cause of her dear child's death, and the trial of her heart and mind was indeed agonizing. Mr. Long made a neat little coffin for Mirtie. She was taken to Wartell and buried among strangers, Mr. Long alone accompanying Dr. Howard, for the disease was contagious. Mrs. Howard

had to remain with Ardeela. When Mirtie was placed in the coffin she gathered a bouquet of flowers and placed them in her hand, for she often, during her little life, had gathered them in the woods and brought them to her mother. Thus passed away the life of her darling child, and all that remained mortal was borne to its last resting place by the hand of the cruel father. Ardeela slowly recovered, but was deaf in one ear, and her intellect was materially injured.

CHAPTER XXX.

BIRTH AND DEATH OF THE SECOND MIRTIE.

At end of the year another daughter was added to the family. While Mrs. Howard would have preferred a different name for the child, the doctor persisted in calling her Mirtie, and she was so named. Thus it occurred on every hand that Mrs. Howard was at no time permitted to act for herself, or have her wish in the slightest matter. The doctor had considerable trouble to collect his bills at times. Not that the people were dishonest, but they could not dispose of their produce. Many times Mrs. Howard was compelled to take in sewing in order to get money with which to pay taxes. The first summer the doctor's family lived mostly on potatoes and a few blackberries. As the doctor would not go in debt and had no money, his wife suffered many times for bread. Mr. Long quietly slipped her a sack of flour one day, writ-

ing on a slip of paper these words: "From a friend to Mrs. Howard." And it was years before she knew who the kind donor was. She often re called the words of her mother, when, in speaking of the doctor, she would say, "Julia, you will live on 'Bonny Doon' if you marry Dr. Howard." And, indeed, her words had long ago come true. She was very glad her mother did not know it, for it would have been a sweet revenge for her. The second Mirtie wastwo years and nine months old. She complained one night of being cold though not sick. Her mother began doing all she could to get the child warm, but all efforts were unavailing. When morning came, she discovered little Mirtie covered with black spots all over her body, and she saw that her child was sinking very fast. All was done that the willing hands of a loving mother could do, but at noon she was a corpse. Tenderly she was laid in her little coffin, and buried in the new graveyard of Onoco. The doctor seemed very much broken down by the death of his second child, although he did not seem to become so much attached to her as to his first Mirtie. The villagers all turned out to the funeral and silently they wended their way to the little grave in which she was laid to rest, where the green grass grew rapidly over her, while the wild birds sung their songs on the branches of the trees above her, but awoke her not.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE INDIAN WIGWAMS—BIRTH OF WALLACE.

About one mile from Onoco was a small creek, called Wasset creek, and along this stream the Indians built their wigwams. The red man had ceased to hunt the deer, or any other wild game in this state, and none of their trails could be found. The pale face had driven them away, and they had gone farther west to get deeper into the forest. The wigwams which they had used still remained, and the children of the village used them for play-houses. The stream always flowed with cool, fresh water, and to this the horses and cattle came in time of drought, to quench their thirst. As time passed by money became more plentiful. Mrs. Howard suggested to her husband that he buy some land near the village, and as the suggestion pleased him he made the purchase.

When the month of February came round a son was ushered into the household, welcomed by his mother, but not by his father, for Dr. Howard never desired to be the father of a son. He at once took a dislike to Wallace, as he had been named, his grandfather Howard giving him the name. Julia was in very poor health, and, after returning from his visit to his patients, the doctor got into the habit of spending his time at a debating club, which had been formed in the village, leaving his wife alone. One evening, after he returned from the club, she told him that it was hard to be left alone every night when she was so

ill. He told her not to dictate to him, and as he said so he drew back his hand and slapped her in the face. She fell over unconscious. This rather frightened him, and, picking her up, he laid her on the bed and bathed her temples. When she recovered he told her that in the future she must be very careful how she addressed him, for she knew his temper, and she must understand that he would not allow a wife to dictate to him.

CHAPTER XXXII.

MRS. HOWARD'S FLIGHT—HER FATHER'S DEATH AND WILL.

That night she lay awake and planned her escape. Morning came. She cooked his breakfast and put it on the table, but he would not touch it, and in that frame of mind left the house to visit his patients. After he was gone Julia took a loaf of bread and some cold meat and put them into a small sack with her children's clothing. Carrying her baby in her arms, and leading Ardeela, she slipped out the back door lest some of the neighbors might see her and tell the doctor which way she had gone. She was seen by no one except the merchant Mr. Hatch, as she entered the woods not far from the house. She had started to go to her childhood home, to see her father. She knew he would forgive her when he saw her distress. She went but a few rods at a time, then was obliged to sit down and rest. She had gone about two miles in the forest, when looking back,

behold, she saw her husband on his horse following her. He rode up and said:

"Julia, for God's sake, where are you going with two children, lame as you are with the rheumatism?"

She replied: "I am going to my father, if I live to get there. I am going to beg my way on foot."

"Julia, you shall not leave me. I repented long ago of my treatment of you last night."

"Doctor, I have tried you often enough. You ill-treat me, and then ask me to forgive. In a few days it will be the same old story over again. My heart is broken. Life has no charms for me."

"Won't you go home with me, Julia?"

"I think not," she replied.

"Then," said he, "I will take the children. The law gives them to me."

He touched the right chord. She could not give up her children to such an unkind father. He said: "Julia, I will do my best to keep my temper. I know you are the best of wives. Try me once more." She arose, and he placed her on the back of faithful Kate, with the babe in her arms, and Ardeela behind her, while he walked at their side. In half an hour they reached home. Mr. Hatch came in. "Mrs. Howard," said he, you left home early this morning."

The doctor spoke spoke up, and said: "Yes, she went beechnutting, to please Ardeela. It was well you saw her, for when I reached her she was tired out."

Julia thought, "O, how can he tell that false-

hood," but said nothing. It was well she returned with her husband at that time, for at the end of the week a letter came with a black seal. It was the only one she had received since she had left Salon. She opened it with trembling hands, and found it was from her brother Rollie.

"HAMLET, October 14th.

"My dear sister Julia:—After you left Salon, sister Ada moved back to our neighborhood. Every thing went on at home as usual, but we were very lonely without you. Father had been sick with the rheumatism for some time, when it took the form of gout, which caused his death. His sufferings were beyond description. He often spoke of you, and when we asked him if we should send for you, he said: 'No, it is of no use.' He said, shortly before he died: 'When I die,

Around my bier,
Let none shed a tear.
But be brave, like my
Dear Julia Marie.'

He loved you to the last. There was a large concourse of people at the funeral, coming from far and near. We laid his dear form on the State line, at the spot he selected so long ago, and where you and he so often sat together. The day we laid him there the birds were thick in the branches of the trees, and seemed to be singing their wail over the remains of our father. He made a will, or rather I think mother made it. He has left nothing to you, or our youngest sister, Hettie,—she having married a man by the name Bartold, against the wishes of father and mother.

Father died as he lived, a deist, at least he made no other profession, yet, at times, I thought he did think differently, though too proud to acknowledge it. Now, sister, I want you to come home and break the will, and get your share. I think father intended you to have it, for he made a flaw in the will by not willing you one dollar. The rest of the family are well.

"From your loving brother,

ROLLIE."

The last friend was gone. Throwing herself upon the bed, she sobbed and cried the bitterest of tears, till she at last fell to sleep, and was only awakened by the crying of her babe. When her husband came home she handed him the letter. After he had finished reading it, he said: "We will go at once, if you are able to travel." She told him she could go by the beginning of the week followlng. The doctor then made arrangements with Dr. Miller to attend his patients during his absence.

On the following Tuesday they set out in a private conveyance for their childhood home. In four days they reached his father's, and they were rejoiced to see them, as they had been absent eight years. The breaking of Judge Collens' will was the topic of conversation that evening. Father Howard informed them that in that State a will could not be broken without the assistance of the husband. The doctor replied:

"Then it will never be done; for I won't assist. If Julia can break it alone, I shall have no objections."

In vain Julia, assisted by his father and mother, endeavored to persuade him to help his wife in the matter. After getting rested she asked him to go with her to her mother's. This he declined to do, saying his brother Willis would go with her, and it was so arranged. They had not gone far on the way when she discovered that he was talking in a wild, incoherent manner. It occurred to her at once that he must be insane. She said very little little to him, except to keep him in a cheerful frame of mind, and finally, after a tiresome and fearful ride, they arrived at her mother's door. To her great surprise, she was met by her mother, who seemed glad to see her. After a little time she told her all about her father's sufferings and death, but never said a word in regard to the will or property. In the morning they found the room Willis had occupied vacated, and upon going to the barn, found his horse missing also. What time he left, they could not determine, but concluded he must have gone sometime during the night. The next day Julia prepared to visit her father's grave. Going alone, she had ample time for thought and reflection, and long ere she reached the spot which her father had selected, her mind, like a ship tempest tossed, was yielding to the waves of sorrow, with scarce a ray of hope in which to cast the anchor of her weary heart. Arriving at the grave she kneeled down, and scarce realizing what to say, began: "Father in heaven, Thou hast seen fit to remove the one dearest to me on earth; oh, that thou wouldst pity thy child and claim her for thine own, ere she leaves this

spot." She stopped, and the thought of her children loomed up before her tear-stained eyes, and she thought how wrong it was to wish to leave them and die. She arose, and in the anguish of her heart, and beside the grave of her father, she raised her voice in prayer and said: "I will do my duty and trust in my dear Savior to sustain me in my helplessness."

She heard a footstep, and turning she saw her brother Rollie, who had been silently watching her. He had missed her from the house, and at once followed her to her father's grave. They sat down together and talked calmly. She said, "Rollie, let no tombstone mark this spot, for it was father's wish to me."

"The wish, dear sister, shall be granted," he answered, and going again to the grave, they took one more look and departed. As they walked slowly along, Rollie asked her what she intended doing in regard to the will. She replied, "The doctor will not assist me, and according to the laws of this state I cannot break it without his assistance."

"Julia," he said, "I am very sorry, and if it is ever in my power to give you part of the estate, I will do it. When mother dies I will give you half of my share."

She thanked him and said, "But you may look at it in a very different light by that time."

"Never, Julia, never," he replied. They had now reached the house, and found their mother gathering up the coverlets, quilts, blankets, sheets, pillow-cases, table-linen, and many other articles


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of the kind, and when Julia came in, she told her that if she would wash them, she might have them, and that there were enough to last her for fifteen years. Julia of course accepted the offer, and while she was scarcely able to take care of herself she took them, and after working very hard for two days she succeeded in finishing her work. The next day her mother told her to go and visit Ada, and she would pack the things in a box and send them over by Rollie or Zeno. But Julia wished Zeno to go with her for company, so she could visit with him. The next day she bade farewell to her mother, and Zeno accompanied her to her sister's. Ada gave Julia a most hearty welcome, for she loved her. That evening who should arrive but Dr. Howard and the children. Julia was not expecting him, but was glad to again see her little ones. Ada was also in favor of Julia's making an effort to get a share of their father's estate, and used every persuasion in endeavoring to show the doctor that it was his duty to help his wife in the matter, but to no purpose whatever, as he flatly refused to do anything. Julia asked him how he ever expected to meet his God, when he knew that by falsehood he had taken her from her father, who loved her, and that he had seen her live without the necessaries of life, even without bread, and now he would prevent her from getting what was lawfully her own. He made no reply. The next morning Ada again asked him. He answered in a determined voice, "I will not assist. I am able to keep my wife and family. If Judge Collens had not honor enough to leave his child

what lawfully belonged to her, she must do without it."

Rollie came that day, bringing the box. Julia opened it to show her husband what her mother had given her. Imagine her surprise when she found it contained only two sheets, two pairs of pillow cases, two coverlets, one quilt, and two towels and tablecloths. She said nothing to her husband in regard to the washing she had done, and would have sent them back to her mother by Rollie if it had not been that she was so greatly in need of them. She bade Rollie and Zeno farewell, with no word for her mother. They visited Carol Wilson during her stay with her sister, in company with Mr. Ballard. The time for Julia's departure drew near, and Ada felt as though she could not have her sister again leave her for years, and perhaps forever. They were ready to start, and the sad good-bye was said. Ada clasped her sister's hand, and said:

"Julia, if you are ever in need remember that I will divide the last cent with you. Father and mother have always assisted me thus far; the property is all willed to mother during her lifetime; she can, if she choose, divide it. Zeno comes in for the largest share, as he was the favorite. You are the only one who has the power to break the will, as he left something for each one of the rest of us, although Hettie gets but one dollar."

They then started for father Howard's. As soon as they arrived Julia told Mrs. Howard she thought Willis must be insane. Mrs. Howard burst into tears, and said:

"I have known that for the past year, but I was in hopes you would not discover it, for I thought you would have trouble enough."

They remained a short time, and, having finished their visit, set out for their home at Onoco. Julia's heart was filled with sadness, and when they were crossing the river she silently hoped she might never again have to do so. Looking into the water she murmured to herself:

"Would that the past of my life could be hurled deep beneath the ripples of this stream and forever pass into oblivion, without leaving a shadow by which to ever trace it." But her better angel asserted itself, and she said: "While the clouds seem to fast gather around me I will endeavor to be cheerful as possible. I have a duty to perform to my children and husband, which I shall endeavor to do, so that when I shall have been 'weighed in the balance,' I will not be 'found wanting.'"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

BIRTH OF MINA—DR. HOWARD AND WIFE UNITE WITH THE CHURCH.

The following May Julia became the mother of another daughter. This time she had her way in naming the baby, so she called her Mina. In looks she was different from the rest of the children, being a blonde. In that particular she closely resembled the Howards. But as she grew

older the disposition of her mother strongly developed. Ardeela was growing to be quite a large girl, and each day showed more of the disposition of her father, with the exception of her being more kindhearted. When she was six years old her mother attempted to correct her. She looked up at her and said, "Mother, you behave yourself and I will." Her mother smiled, although she felt sad, for she could plainly see her father's disposition.

Dr. Howard was a successful practitioner, good counsel, and was well liked by other physicians. In their debating clubs he would take the side of the question exactly opposite to his conscientious views, and always win the decision in his favor. He was a man of influence, and he knew it. His word was law in the village, with but a few exceptions. He did not like those who opposed him, nor did he like to have his wife associate with their families, which was at times a great annoyance to her. She never had made any intimate friends while living there, with the exception of a Mrs. Sturdly, the mother of a gentleman by the name of Cranelin, who had come there from New York, and bought a farm at the edge of the village, where he and his mother resided. They in time became very intimate friends, and Mrs. Howard's children were taught to call her grandma, very much to her delight.

For a long time Mrs. Howard had given the subject of religion much thought, and finally picked up courage enough to advise her husband to unite with the church as a seeker of religion,

for she thought that with that wall around him, it might prove to be a support which might enable him to be a better man. To her utter astonishment, when she spoke to him about the matter, he told her kindly, if she would unite with him, they would go to Wartell and unite with the Seceders of that place. She was only too anxious. Communion service was to take place on the third Sabbath of the month. On the Saturday previous with their family they traveled eleven miles to Wartell, and stopped at her brother's. At the church that afternoon they presented themselves as candidates, and after being closely examined, they were accepted. The next day was to be their first communion. Mrs. Howard was happy beyond expression, for she had so long desired to become a member of the church, and this was her first opportunity. And the happiest thought of all was, that her husband, too, was a member. She felt that if this did not make a radical change, she could never have a hope for him. Of course with the distance between their home and the church, they could not expect to attend church as often as they desired, yet if their hearts were right, they could worship God in their own humble home.

The next day they returned home, Mrs. Howard feeling more happy and composed than in many days before. She had set the supper on the table, and all had seated themselves around it, when Dr. Howard made the first attempt in his life in asking a blessing. His effort proved a success, and the meal was the happiest one of Mrs. Howard's life.

The ladies of the village had inaugurated the custom of gathering together at one of their homes certain afternoons, and after spending the afternoon together be joined by their husbands at tea and during the evening. This afforded them a great deal of pleasure, and greatly promoted the sociability of the neighborhood. Mr. George Sterling and wife were among the number of those with whom many happy hours were spent in this way. Mrs. Sterling was a woman who always made the best of everything, and was a good friend of Mrs. Howard. If she had a skeleton in her closet she kept it there, and in this respect she was very much like Mrs. Howard.

The Doctor concluded to clear some of his land, but said he would first visit his parents, and upon his return would begin to cut the timber and prepare the ground for farming. He did so, and one night, upon his return, while attending family prayers, he prayed that God would change his heart and renew within him a right spirit. Upon this confession Mrs. Howard's hopes of his conversion and faith grew stronger, as it was the first time she had ever known him to humble himself. A short time after this he left home to visit the sick, telling her he would be home at 6 o'clock. She arranged her supper for that hour, and, with everything ready, she watched for his coming. As she patiently waited the clock told the hours of 7 and 8, and yet he did not come. Growing alarmed lest something had happened to him, she took the children and went to Grandmother Sturdley's, and, leaving them with her, started in

search of her husband. She was afraid a tree might have fallen upon him, so she wandered through the woods, and, stopping to listen, she called "Doctor! Doctor!" but no answer could she get. After rambling around she retraced her steps, worn and weary, and taking her children she returned home, and found the Doctor had arrived a few minutes before. He seemed in a petulant frame of mind, and his first words to her as she entered the house were spoken in harsh tones. He then told her that if she ever left home again to worry him he would visit her with the punishment of the slave. He commanded her to get him a warm supper, as he would not eat that which had been so long waiting for him. In his conversation he told her he left the woods at 6 o'clock and spent the evening with a friend, Mr. Courtland, and gave her strict orders never to undertake hunting for him again. Supper being again ready she placed it on the table for him and the children, but she could not eat. He ate heartily and had just finished when Dr. Miller called in great haste to have him accompany him to hold a consultation over a very sick patient. They left in a few minutes, and Dr. Howard did not return until 2 o'clock in the morning. Mrs. Howard was awake when he came in, but said nothing. He quietly retired and was soon fast asleep. Mrs. Howard, worn and weary, slept till 8 o'clock next morning. The doctor was resting, and she quietly rose, dressed herself, and went about preparing breakfast. When it was ready she placed it upon the table, and, going to the

bed she spoke to him. He awoke, and getting up came out and seated himself at the table and ate a very hearty meal. Suddenly he spoke up and said:

"Julia, if you disclose my treatment to you I will punish you, even if I have to hang on the gallows for it."

While she was not prepared for such treatment or language, she made no reply; but the thought flashed quickly across her mind: "Can it be possible that his mind, too, is going like that of his brother's?" and again she looked at him, with the thought that "Could any sane man treat a wife in the manner in which she had been treated? If he is insane there is method in his madness." With these thoughts crowding her mind, she finished up her morning work. That afternoon she was invited to a visiting party, to be held at at Mr. Chatland's, and the Doctor, as usual upon such occasions, was invited to take tea with them in the evening.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

BUILDING THE LOG CABIN.

That afternoon one of the ladies said to Mrs. Howard: "How happy you must be with such a kind husband. You have every reason to be proud of him, for he is so intelligent, and he speaks so highly of you everywhere. I never saw a man dote so much on a wife. He never seems to tire praising you."

"Is that so?" said Mrs. Howard.

Her friend continued: "How do you think you will like it down on the farm? I hear the doctor is building a cabin with two rooms in it."

Mrs. Howard looked up in surprise, and said: "I did not know that he was building a log cabin, nor did I know that he had any intention of moving on the farm."

"O, I'm sorry I spoke," said Mrs. Chatland, "I suppose the doctor intends it for a surprise to you. The two-room cabin will probably do you, for he intends to build a frame house in two years, just such a one as will please you."

"Mrs. Chatland," said Julia, "he seems to have informed you of all his intentions, what is he going to do with our house in the village?"

"Well, I suppose I may as well tell you the rest, as I have told you this much. He has bargained it to a Mr. Rich. Now, Mrs. Howard, please do not tell the doctor, for I would not have spoken of it, but I thought of course you knew it," said Mrs. Chatland.

"Don't you wish you had such a loving husband?" said Mrs. Howard.

"I think if my husband would do business that way, I would let him hear from me at least," said Mrs. Chatland.

The subject was dropped, and in the evening the gentlemen arrived for tea, as usual, with the exception of Doctor Howard, who came a little late. When he came in he went up to his wife and kissed her.

"There," said one of the ladies, "is an exam-

ple for you gentlemen. You had better follow suit."

"Perhaps they do their kissing at home, so as to not make so much show outside."

The doctor frowned, but said nothing. They were called to tea, and seating themselves at the table, a general conversation ensued. Mr. Hatch asked: "Doctor, will you accept the nomination for Assemblyman? You can easily be elected, and that would be your first step toward Congress."

The doctor replied: "If you want to run me on written tickets, I will accept the nomination, but I won't pay for printed ones. I have other use for my money at present."

There was no more said about politics, and presently Mrs. Sterling and the doctor were engaged in conversation. She said: "Doctor Howard, why don't you build on your farm? It would be much handier for you, and is not far from town."

"I have thought some of doing so, but on account of my wife's poor health I have almost given it up, and the village school will be so handy for the children to attend. I have always told my wife that our children shall be educated, even though I never have a dollar to leave them. And it is also her greatest desire. Mrs. Howard is a great reader. She mostly prefers sound literature."

Mrs. Sterling replied, "We know that by her conversation. It is a great pity that she has been brought to this lonely pioneer settlement. She

could grace any society in the city. Doctor, I don't see why you settled in this out-of-the-way place. You should at least have settled in a town like Wartell, where you soon would have had a large practice and a famous reputation. I see you have an ambitious disposition. You like to be ahead and have others bow to you."

"I do, I acknowledge it," said the doctor.

"You probably think it is better to be a king among beggars than to be a beggar among kings," said she.

"I do," he replied. "If I had wealth I would like to live in such a town as Wartell; and had Judge Collens left Mrs. Howard the fortune that justly belonged to her we would have taken up our residence there."

She then asked him why he did not assist her to break the will, to which he replied, "I thought that if Judge Collens had not honor enough to leave a portion of his property to his daughter I should not obtain it by law."

She told him that inasmuch as his wife desired his assistance, it was his duty to do so. To this he replied, "I do not wish to have any one dictate to me;" and leaving her, he walked out of the room. Mrs. Howard was in conversation with some of the gentlemen, but her ears were open to the conversation between the doctor and Mrs. Sterling. Mrs. Howard smiled as she saw that her husband was irritated. She thought he would show his disposition, and she hoped he would, as he had so severely warned her against disclosing his cruelty to her and the children. The doctor

walked around the yard a few moments, and returned looking as pleasant as though he had no temper to ruffle. After a few minutes the company requested the doctor to sing for them. He did so, singing "Bonny Doon." They all looked at him in astonishment. Such a gift! The tears fast gathered in the eyes of Mrs. Howard, for she felt that that was the song by which she had been won, and that to her everlasting sorrow. Every note he sang recalled the words of her mother, and the scenes of her childhood home rose fast before her tear-stained eyes. He sang a number of pieces, much to the delight of the company. The rest of the evening was spent in conversation, and at 10 o'clock they returned to their homes. Dr. Howard was not aware that his wife had overhead his conversation with Mrs. Sterling, and he never referred to it.

The log cabin was built without the doctor saying anything about it to his wife; but she knew all about it. Mr. Courtland called one evening, and in the course of conversation asked the doctor if he had finished his cabin, and when he intended to move. The doctor replied that he would move down to the swamps of Ballqueather in about two weeks. As he said this he watched Mrs. Howard's countenance. Mr. Courtland then turned and asked her how she liked the idea of moving to the farm. She said, "I do not like it at all. I was not informed by my husband that he intended to move there. I have always had a desire to educate my children, and it has always been the doctor's wish.

If we move to the farm it will be too far for Ardeela and Wallace to attend school."

"I did not think of that," said the doctor, "but the house is built, and we will move into it."

"And what are you going to do with the house we are living in?" asked his wife.

He said, "I have sold it to Mr. Rich, and I want you to sign the deed to-morrow."

"Well," said Mrs. Howard, "you are a very kind husband indeed, to build a house, and sell one, without ever mentioning it to your wife. I should think she would love a husband who is so devoted to her. With such treatment at home, it is necessary that you should be loud in your praises of her being such a noble wife." Mrs. Howard was taking advantage of Mr. Courtland's presence, by partially letting him know that the doctor had two sides. When she had finished, the doctor looked completely beaten, and was glad to change the subject. Turning to Mr. Courtland, he said, "Did you know that I have been spoken of as a candidate for the General Assembly?" He replied, "Yes, doctor, I did hear something of it. I think you are foolish not to agree to pay for printed tickets."

The doctor replied, "They can vote for me on written tickets just as well. And I will prefer to be elected in that way. It would be novel."

Mr. Courtland dropped the subject, and soon started for home, thinking very differently from what he did when he entered Dr. Howard's house. He pitied Mrs. Howard. The next day Mr. Rich came to have her sign the deed, which she did

with a trembling hand, and thought as she penned her name, "O! my God, what next?" Julia then finished up her morning work, and left Mina with Grandmother Sturdly. Her son, Mr. Cranelin, had married and had two daughters, Sadell and Mabell, the latter being nearly the same age as Mina. Julia then took Ardeela and Wallace, and went to gather blackberries. As Mrs. Howard was afflicted with rheumatism walking went hard with her; but they wandered around through the fields until they had their pails full, after which they started for home, reaching there about sunset. Her good old friend, Grandma Sturdly, had come, and had supper on the table, and Mina was asleep on the bed. She took some of the berries, and soon had a few picked over for supper, while Mrs. Howard rested. Dr. Howard was soon present, seated at the table, but this time he omitted kissing his wife. He saw the nice lot of blackberries she had gathered, but he did not ask her whether she felt tired or not. Grandmother Sturdly was always her friend, for she, too, had been "through the mill" with her second husband. She had left him, and was living with her son by her first husband. She would sometimes say, "It is we who have trodden on thorns, who can feel for and sympathize with those who are suffering a like fate. The cold world is a poor place to go for sympathy." Mrs. Howard knew this, and Grandmother Sturdly was the only one in whom she entrusted her confidence.

CHAPTER XXXV.

DR. HOWARD AND FAMILY MOVE TO THE LOG CABIN.

In two weeks Dr. Howard and family moved to the swamps of Ballqueather. Within a week after the removal to the swamps, Mrs. Howard was prostrated with a fever. Ardeela and her father did the work, and waited upon Mrs. Howard except when Grandma Sturdly came to assist them. As Mrs. Howard lay so feeble upon her bed, she thought, "Can this be Judge Collens' daughter—that frail girl who was once at the Hamlet? I thought I was then overwhelmed with sorrow; where am I now? I have my own sufferings to bear, as well as to see my little children suffer around me." She was sick some weeks longer, and while she recovered partially, she suffered a great deal at times for over a year. The fall winds began to whistle around the cabin; the leaves dropped slowly to the ground, the leafless boughs swaying to and fro at the mercy of the winter's wind. Julia did all that she could in the way of preparing clothing for her family before the cold weather set in. In a short time autumn was gone, the beautiful snowflakes were flying in the air, lightly settling on the tree-tops, and covering the roofs of the cabins. The snow fell so fast, and became so deep, that Ardeela had to shovel paths to the wood-pile and to the well, while her father walked about seemingly unconscious of the fact that the task was too

great for her strength. Her mother, seeing the task too much for her child, went to her assistance, and in so doing took a severe cold, and came near dying from an attack of quinsy. She had hardly recovered when the doctor told her he had invited the villagers with whom they were acquainted, to spend the evening at their log cabin. She told her husband that it would have been better for him to have waited till he was sure the guests would not be needed to attend the funeral. She said she thought he ought to have known she was not able to prepare supper for them. He finally decided to go and get Grandma Sturdly, and with the assistance Mrs. Howard could give her, they succeeded in preparing for the guests. In the meantime the doctor had composed a parody on the "Swamps of Ballqueather." After the guests had arrived and spent a while in chatting, they requested the doctor to favor them with a song. He sang the parody which he had prepared, and all praised it very highly, and asked him where he got it. He told them that it was one of his own production, and they acknowledged it to be far superior to the original piece. He had prepared the parody especially to dedicate his log cabin, and it was a success. And while they spent a very pleasant evening, they said they would not have come if they had known that Mrs. Howard was feeling so badly, and hoped the party would not prove too much for her. After bidding the Howard family good-night the company departed, being wiser than they were when they met. They now saw that the doctor, with all his talk and

pleasant ways in the outside world, was a cruel tyrant to his poor wife and children at home, and sympathy for Mrs. Howard began to spring up on all sides.

"Mrs. Howard seems cheerful, but it is all put on for a blind. I believe she is afraid of him, but for some reason she keeps the secret to herself. What a great pity it is, for she is such a noble woman."

These were the words of Mrs. Chatland as they were on their way home. That winter was a hard one for Mrs. Howard, as the Doctor spent most of his evenings in Onoco, after making the round among his patients.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ANDREW HOLLAND—THE BIRTH OF ELGIE HOWARD.

Grandma Sturdly had a half-sister who married a man by the name of Holland, and after Mrs. Sturdly had come there to live, Mr. and Mrs. Holland moved to Onoco also. He was not very happily married, as his wife was disposed to be jealous of her husband. Dr. Howard possessed one good quality—he was never jealous of his wife, upon any occasion, or under any circumstances. Mr. Holland became quite well acquainted with the doctor's family, and when his wife would abuse him he would go to the doctor's and talk with Mrs. Howard until the doctor arrived. He always did the errands for Mrs. Howard when he

saw that she was to feeble to do them, and though Mrs. Holland was jealous of her husband, she did not object to his helping the doctor's wife in time of need. After the doctor moved to the farm, Mr. and Mrs. Holland visited them quite often, for the doctor was their family physician. They would go when the doctor was gone, and stay with Mrs. Howard for company, as she had no one but her children to stay with her during the long evenings in the lonely woods.

One evening Mr. Holland said, "Dr. Howard, I think you do wrong to leave your wife alone so much in her delicate state of health."

This made him angry, and he replied, "Mr. Holland, I can manage my own family without assistance."

"I do not know but that you manage it too well," replied Mr. Holland. As the speaker was one of the doctor's patients, he said nothing, lest he should offend him; and for once Dr. Howard's mouth was closed.

However, the doctor seemed to do better after Mr. Holland's talk, as he spent more of his time at home during the balance of the winter. Spring opened early; the mornings were cool for that locality, for most of the land was low and swampy, though some few portions of it were dry and level. The wild flowers soon blossomed in the woods, the trees put forth their green leaves, and the grass was peeping up its tiny green spears, welcoming the sheep and cattle to their summer range. Dr. Howard felt a selfish happiness. He had cleared one field which he planted with corn.

He thought that he could see the time not far distant when his fields would be covered with wheat, oats, and hay, waving majestically in the wind. In his haughtiness he said to his wife, "I will not be dependent upon any of my neighbors for their patronage. I will then be independent and I will show my neighbors that I am master of my family, and am able to manage my own affairs."

Spring closed and summer opened warm and sultry. Ardeela had assisted her father in planting the corn, while Mrs. Howard remained in the house to do the work. She said to him one day:

"Doctor, I wish that you would get me a girl; Ardeela is now eight years old, and she must attend school, and then I shall have to keep a girl."

He replied: "Mrs. Howard, I have changed my mind. It will be time enough for her to attend school in three years from now. I don't want any of my children to have more of an education than just enough to enable them to read, write and cipher; that will be enough for them to manage their own accounts. Geography and grammar they need not know anything about, as they are not going to be school teachers."

"That seems very strange," said his wife, "you have always told me that our children should have an education, even though you never had one dollar to leave to them."

He told her he had changed his mind, and that his education had done him no good, and he thought it folly to spend the time and money required to get an education.

Mrs. Howard then said: "It is your own fault,

doctor. You moved into a place where your talent is obscured. I did all I could to prevent you from doing so, but all to no purpose. You might be a shining light in the world, if it were not for your obstinate disposition, and if you do not conquer it, it will lead you the downward road to adversities which would never come to you, and besides, the example you are setting to your children by the misery and sorrow you cast into their lives daily, surely can be no promotion to fine feelings or loving hearts. If you continue in this way, in after years, not only your children, but your wife also, will have turned from you, and, without love, doctor, you will find this a cold world. I often wonder how you can offer a prayer to God, when you do not do your duty to those whom He has entrusted to your care."

"Your lecture is a nice one, Mrs. Howard, but it is falling on stony ground," said the doctor.

She quickly replied: "Be careful and watch that they do not hit you."

It was now the month of August, and the frogs in their homes in the swamp were singing their usual evening song. The days were warm, but the nights cool, making a great deal of sickness, which increased the doctor's practice, and he was away from home the greater part of his time. At this time there was a well-educated gentleman, a bachelor by the name of Wayland Young, came into the neighborhood, and purchased eighty acres of land, one mile west of Dr. Howard's, on Wassett creek. Mr. Young and the doctor became fast friends, which proved to

be of no benefit to the doctor's family, as he encouraged him in his strange ideas, which at times were insane ones.

On the 20th day of August the weather was cold and bleak as a November day, and Elgie Howard was ushered into the world, a frail, sickly babe. The water had frozen the night before, and the remark was made, "This poor child, if she lives, will break ice through life." Ardeela returned home, having been absent at one of the neighbors. Mrs. Howard called her to the bed and told her to look and see what a nice little sister she had. Ardeela looked as her mother had told her to do. When she saw the baby she exclaimed: "I hate your baby," and turning to her mother she said: "Mother, sell this baby, for we don't want it," and left the room. She called her back, and tried to persuade her to change her mind, but it was of no use. She would say, "I hate her, but I love Mina and Wallace."

The doctor procured a servant for one week, after which time Ardeela, assisted by good old Grandmother Sturdly and the doctor, did the work and took care of the baby. Elgie cried almost incessantly until she was nine months old. She was the first one of Mrs. Howard's children that she had the full privilege of naming, and the doctor was sorry for it afterwards that he gave her the privilege, for he did not like the name.

One night the doctor told his wife, on going to bed, that if the baby cried during the night, he would throw her out on the floor. As usual Elgie cried, whereupon he grabbed her and threw her

out against the bureau. "My God!" exclaimed Mrs. Howard, "you have killed your child."

He jumped out of bed, and, picking her up, he found her bruised, but still living. He endeavored to make his wife believe he did the cowardly act while dreaming, but she never believed him. When Grandmother Sturdly came she confided the story to her, and they wondered why God in his wisdom had cut off every means of escape from her at the time she made the desperate attempt. She prayed daily that if it was God's will he would take her and her children away, for she felt that the grave would be a welcome place of rest. The bitter dregs of sorrow's cup were more than she could bear. But the Lord did not see fit to answer her prayer, and the road destined for her was yet a long one. People began to think the doctor very eccentric. When he had a patient that was dangerously ill he would walk the floor night and day, and Mrs. Howard, knowing the condition of his mind, felt that the people's lives were not safe under his treatment. She advised him to give up his practice, act only as counsel, and spend the rest of his time on the farm. He took what she had said kindly, and replied that he had been thinking of that himself.

The next autumn he retired from practice, and looked after his farming. The election for Assemblyman was soon to take place, but the doctor would not pay for the printed tickets, so when the election did come off some voted written tickets, while others of his friends were so provoked that they voted for the opposing candidate. But,

nevertheless, the doctor came within ten votes of being elected. This pleased him just as well as to have received a majority. He was now turning his full attention to farming, though he read a great deal, and kept himself posted in medicine. He made slaves of his children, and did not give them decent clothing to wear. He cut the ruffles off from his shirt bosoms, and he put on a broad collar, never changing this style. Mrs. Howard's feelings were very much hurt by these strange actions, for she had a great deal of pride, and desired him to dress as other people did.

Ardeela was ten years old when she started to school. She was slow to learn, as her memory had been very much impaired by the scarlet fever. Her father did not use the judgment that one of his experience and education should have done, and when Ardeela would go to him for assistance in her studies, if she failed to accept his explanation as readily as he wished, he would get out of patience and call her a fool, sadly discouraging the poor child.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

MRS. HOWARD'S RINGS—ARRIVAL OF MRS. DROUNLY.

Mrs. Howard had broken the ring that Doctor Lemon had given, also the one her father had given her. One day the doctor asked her about them, and he said he was going to Wartell, and would

take them to the jeweler's and have them mended. She trusted in his word enough to let him have them, and when he came home from Wartell he told his wife that he had got the rings mended, and put them into his vest pocket, and that on his way home he had lost them. His wife thought in a moment that he was telling her an untruth, but she did not dare to contradict him. She thought that when she went to Wartell she would go and see the jeweler and find out for herself whether he had sold them and pocketed the money. It was a long time since she had visited her brother, and on the first opportunity took that as an excuse to visit the jeweler who she supposed had mended the rings. He informed her that he had never seen the rings, and as he did not have them she knew it would be impossible for her to find them. Imagine the feelings of Mrs. Howard, as she thought of the last gift of her father being sold by her own husband. The cup was full and Mrs. Howard was losing all respect for the doctor. She never mentioned them to him, for she knew he would only tell her another falsehood; and thus the rings she had so lovingly treasured had passed into oblivion.

That year there was a school district organized one mile north of Doctor Howard's, and his family were to be taken into the district. Mrs. Howard requested her husband to petition the board to let them remain in the Onoco district, as it would be much more convenient for the children to attend school at Onoco, but the doctor paid no attention to her request. He was busy

with his farm work and cleared his land very fast. He made Ardeela and Wallace pile brush, and left his poor sickly wife without any help in the house. Thus day after day she was left alone. The doctor's policy was to make as big a show of himself a possible, and in order to show to advantage he frequently made evening parties. With the exception of those who were acquainted with his cruelty to his wife, he was looked up to by the community, because they all considered him a man of talent. He always took particular pains to tell what a noble wife he had, and that he should not know what to do without such a treasure. In this way he could easily blind those who were not acquainted with the facts.

They had opened a road from Onoco to Sewellen, which was now finished, and the four-horse stage was being run from Sewellen to Wartell, which made it much more convenient. The land adjoining on the south was purchased by Mr. Cottrel, and that adjoining on the west was purchased by Mr. Tilor. The public road separated Mr. Cottrel's land from that of Mr. Tilor and Dr. Howard. The road wound round through the woodland to the right of the swamps of Ballqueather, which were covered with black and tag alder, with here and there a tall swamp beech, or a water elm towering toward the sky. The stage rattled along with its seemingly happy driver seated on the top, and broke the monotony of Mrs. Howard's life, as she could look out and see the stage with passengers pass by. It was not long till Mr. Cottrel and Mr. Tilor built houses

on their land and occupied them. Mr. Tilor, who was a widower, lived with his daughter, who had been married to a man by the name of Drounly, who had so cruelly treated her that she was compelled to take her child, Orlena, in her arms and flee from him in order to save her life. Mrs. Drounly and her child were soon fast friends of the Howard family. This made Mrs. Howard feel much happier, for she found a friend in Mrs. Drounly, whom she highly prized. Mrs. Howard was unable to do her work, but the doctor would not keep a servant girl for her, so she was compelled to keep Ardeela from school to help her.

Elgie was by this time two years old, and something of a comic picture, with her brown eyes, brunette complexion, and her head covered with a solid mass of auburn curls. She was a child every one noticed. Dr. Miller took a fancy to her, and she loved Dr. Miller, always calling him, "Doca Milly." She would run down the path and halloo, "Doca Milly, Doca Milly, Ardeela won't give me any mickle." He would pick her up in his arms and tell her not to cry—next time he would whip Ardeela. When the children teased her she would say, "I tell Doca Milly on you;" and she always did, and the doctor in turn never failed to take her part. Dr. Miller had no children of his own, and he loved little Elgie, and often begged Dr. and Mrs. Howard to give her to him. He said he would take her as his own, educate her, and make her the heir of his estate after the death of himself and wife. The doctor and Mrs. Howard finally gave their consent, as

Mrs. Howard believed that she should not live long in her frail health, and in case Providence saw fit to call her from her children Elgie would be provided with a good home. Dr. Miller's wife, however, preferred Mina, and did not want Elgie, while her husband would not have Mina, and had set his heart on having "his curly head," as he always called her. Because of disagreement between the doctor and his wife neither of them were taken, much to the disappointment of all concerned, but especially so to the doctor and little Elgie. Mrs. Howard would have felt very sad to have parted with her child, and at times she thought she could not do so; but the dictates of her judgment overruled her heart. She felt that death might soon overtake her, and then poor Elgie would be left entirely under the control of her cruel and tyrant father. She was a delicate child, and not fit to battle with the world. Ardeela continued to dislike Elgie, but Mina and her brother Wallace thought a great deal of her. They loved to tease her, and when she began to cry they would call her "Jackson's cat." Mrs. Howard would endeavor to correct them, and tell them they would cultivate a temper in Elgie which would be unnatural. Wallace and Mina finally started to school, and Elgie was allowed to rest while they were away. There had been a log school-house built in the northern district that winter, to which Mina and Wallace went. They would spell at home in the evening, and Elgie would try to help them, although she did not know

a letter. This afforded them a great deal of amusement.

Shortly after this Elgie was taken ill with the ague, and when she would shake Mina and Wallace would laugh, for they thought she did it purposely. Their mother explained to them that their sister was sick, and could not help the shaking; but they said it was so funny that they must laugh. However, they did not laugh long before Mina and Wallace were both shaking with the ague, and had to quit school. Dr. Howard did his best to check the disease, but quite a long time elapsed before they found relief, and as school was soon to be closed they did not again attend.

The doctor by this time had the stumps dug out, and several fields under cultivation. The wheat and the oats were bowing their heads in the wind to one another. The tall grass waved majestically, as it stood erect all over the field, and seemed to look down upon the smaller crops around it.

The children were all afraid of their father, and when his footsteps were heard all was silent. When he entered the room their playful pranks ceased.

Mrs. Howard asked her husband when he was going to build a new house. The family were growing up, she said, and Ardeela would soon be a young lady, and as a matter of course she would want company, but there would be no room in their present home in which she could entertain. He replied:

"I shall build a new barn this summer—when I shall build a house is quite uncertain."

"But," continued Mrs. Howard, "you told Mrs. Chatland you expected to build me a new house in two years."

"I don't care what I told Mrs. Chatland. I don't want you or any of the neighbors to dictate to me. I will build when it suits me, and not till then," he replied.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ELGIE ATTENDS A FUNERAL—ELGIE STARTS TO SCHOOL.

In the meantime Mr. Tilor died, and Mrs. Howard attended the funeral, taking Elgie with her. They did not have chairs enough for all to be seated, so they made seats by placing boards across ropes. Elgie became entangled in the ropes in some way, and thought that they were going to put her in the coffin. She begged her mother to extricate her. As soon as she was free she ran out of the house with all possible speed, and did not stop till she had reached home, and almost out of breath, she said to her sister:

"They did not get me in that coffin, I tell you."

"They did not intend to put you in the coffin," said Ardeela.

She replied: "I guess they did, for they fastened me up with the rope. But I run away, and they cannot get me."

When her mother returned, she asked her what made her go home from the funeral. Elgie replied:

"Because they were going to put me in the coffin with grandpa Tilor. That was why they tied me with the rope."

Her mother explained to her that it was an accident, and told her that they did not bury persons that were living, and told her that she must always in the future tell her mother when she got frightened.

Mrs. Drounly's son by her first husband, Sidney Melton by name, had come home to his mother just in time to assist in taking care of his grandfather. Soon after the death of Mrs. Drounly's father she was married to Mr. Cottrel, a widower with a family of several grown young ladies and gentlemen. She then left the old homestead, and moved across the street to Mr. Cottrel's residence. Her son Sidney, shortly after the marriage of his mother, left for Zanesville to learn the carriage trade. Orlena remained with her mother and became the constant playmate of the Howard children. She was at the home of the Howards more than her own, and became a great favorite with the doctor. At any time she wished a favor it was gladly granted, when he would flatly refuse the same to his own children. She seemed like one of their own family, and they would await her coming every morning.

The next spring Elgie attended school with Orlena, while the rest of the children were kept at home to help in corn-planting. After calling

school to order the first day the teacher called on Elgie to recite the alphabet; pointing to the first letter she asked her what it was.

"Ape," replied she.

"Spell it," said the teacher.

"A-p-e ape," she replied.

"What is the next letter?" asked the teacher.

"Beet," said Elgie.

The teacher now began to laugh, and asked her who taught her to spell.

"I spell in the class at home," she said, whereupon the teacher told her that she must first learn the letters, and then learn to spell words afterward. Elgie began to cry, and the teacher kissed her and told her to take her seat. The next time she was called to recite Miss Mires pronounced the letters first, and Elgie would repeat them after her. When she came to the letter F, Elgie loudly called "fire," and the school-room rang with laughter. Elgie learned very fast, however, and it was but a short time before she could read and spell. There were a great many teams traveling the road, carrying goods from Wartell to Grove City. The school children would stand in a row by the roadside, all of them bareheaded, and make a courtesy when the teamsters drove by. This pleased the drivers, and they would put their hands in their pockets and give "Curly-head," as they called Elgie, a penny. But Elgie would always divide the pennies as far as they would go among her schoolmates, for she saw they felt slighted. One day she asked the girls if they did

not wish they had curls. They replied that they had better clothes than she had, and that they did not care for curls.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE NEW CHURCH IN ONOCO—THE MUSLIN DRESSES.

The people of Onoco and vicinity built a Presbyterian church in the town of Onoco, Rev. James Dunbar being installed as pastor. Mrs. Howard insisted that she and her husband should take their certificates from the church at Wartell and unite with the Presbyterian congregation at Onoco, as it would be more convenient for them to attend church. They sung the Psalms to worship God, the same as the denomination to which they belonged at Wartell, the only difference being in the church government. But Dr. Howard said he would never join the Presbyterian church, or permit any member of his family to do so. He said he would contribute towards paying a stipulated sum yearly, and he and his family would attend. So the matter was settled.

Dr. Howard drew his purse-strings closer each succeeding year; the more he prospered the more penurious he became. His wife and children did not have decent clothing to attend church, or for the children to go to school. He would not allow the children to wear their dresses short, like those of their neighbors, but compelled their

mother to make them long enough to touch their heels; then they were made fun of. The words of Black Tom came again and again before Mrs. Howard: "Look out foh de man wid de frown on his brow; he make de hard massa to de slaves, hard husban' to de wife, an' wus dan all, a hard fodder to de chillen."

It was a hot, sultry day; the dark clouds seemed to be gathering in the northwest; darker and blacker they grew as they began their onward march across the sky. Mrs. Howard called her husband to the door, and said, "There, Doctor, is the cloud that is indeed emblematical of the one you promised Julia Collens to remove from her path if she would anly consent to become your wife. Have you fulfilled your promise? To-day, my children and I are suffering for necessary clothing. We have not a decent suit to wear to the house of God. I should think that you would tremble with fear and mortification when you see the Almighty power guiding the storm as it advances in its terrible fury."

The thunder was rolling, the lightning flashed its forked tongues in every direction. The clouds were rising one above another, and being driven hither and thither by the terrific force behind them. She continued her conversation with her husband, and said, as they watched the clouds rising, "Think, doctor, but a moment, ere the storm is upon us, what kind of a life you are leading, and how your account would stand should we all be swept into the valley of death."

She had spoken the last words when the storm

with all force was upon them. The cabin squeaked and soon a part of its roof was flying in the air, and the barn was partly unroofed. The rain came down in sheets for hours, and finally, without doing any more serious damage to the house or barn, passed off in a northeasterly direction. After the storm had abated, the doctor visited his fields. He found the wheat and oats bowing their heads in submission to the force of the wind and rain, which had driven them to the earth. The grass, too, had followed the wheat and oats, and was lying flat upon the earth. This, of course, did not suit the doctor, and he returned with the frown on his brow, of which Black Tom was so explicit, and said, "My crops are all ruined, Julia."

"I will soon be monarch of these fields, and independent of my neighbors," said his wife.

"I think my punishment severe enough, without any of your slurs," he replied.

"I am not slurring you, I am only repeating your own words, and thought, perhaps, to remind you of it at this time, would impress you with God's law and will."

That evening Dr. Charles called to see which side of the question he would take at the debating club, which was to meet the next evening, and after remaining a few hours, took his leave. The doctor seemed to be in deep thought, and that night before retiring, he said he would hold family worship. He prayed God in his infinite goodness and wisdom, to soften his heart and make a better man of him. He said be sometimes thought that he was like Pharaoh, and that there was no hope

for him beyond the grave. As he sometimes continued on in this way for a time, his wife thought he was really making an effort to do better. He was very penurious, and his wife told him he ought to dress his family in a manner befitting one in his circumstances, as he was as able to do so as his neighbors. And then, if at their death, they had anything to leave to their children, it would be well; if they did not have, they could see them enjoying it while with them, and cultivating better dispositions. As soon as the wheat dried off, the doctor and Wallace went into the field with their sickles to cut down all that was injured by the storm. Wallace was but a boy, and should have been at school. Mrs. Howard then told the doctor that she would like him to buy a web of calico to make her and the girls dresses. Mina and Elgie had knit socks evenings, earning money enough to buy each one a dress. These they wore to church, but they had none for school. Their father finally went to the store, and bought two calico dresses for his wife and one for Ardeela; and bought a web of unbleached muslin. He brought it home, and told his wife to make Mina and Elgie two dresses apiece for school dresses. This Mrs. Howard refused to do. He flew into a rage, and commanded her to do so with a threat of punishment if she disobeyed. With tears rolling down their cheeks, she and Ardeela made the dresses. Mrs. Howard then thought she would color them with aronetta, that being all the coloring matter she had. When hey were ready to put on, the children were

dressed for school, and they had scarcely reached the school-house, before the scholars began calling them "yellow birds," and laughed and made fun of them. The teacher immediately stopped them, and said, "It is the fault of their father, and if your fathers were like Dr. Howard, you could dress no better." She told them they ought to cast a look of pity and sympathy for the poor children instead of making fun of them. Hand in hand, Mina and Elgie left the school-room, and went trudging along, while behind them came the scholars singing "yellow bird," the moment they were out of sight of the teacher. They went home crying, and said they would not go to school another day with those dresses on. Mina said to Elgie, "Mother tells us to respect father, but we cannot do it, can we, Elgie?"

"No," said Elgie, "let us pray for him to die and go to heaven, so ma and us children can take some comfort. Say, it ain't any harm, is it, Mina, to pray for him to go to heaven?"

"No," said Mina, "and we will just stop here by this bridge that covers this little stream and pray."

Mina and Elgie kneeled down in a quiet corner by the bridge and prayed, "O, God, do take father to heaven and let our dear ma live, so that we won't have to wear these yellow dresses any more, and ma won't get scolded and have to work so hard, for Jesus' sake." Just then Doctor Howard called to them and asked: "What are you girls doing there in the fence corner?"

"Gathering sheep sorrel. Here is some, don't



you want it?" said Elgie, she and Mina handing him some at the same time. "No, I don't want it. You hurry home and carry in the wood, and put the chickens in the pen. They have got out and will scratch the garden."

They started for home, thankful that their father had not heard them pray. "Don't tell ma we prayed, Mina, for it would make her feel bad to think we wanted father to die," said Elgie.

The doctor succeeded in making the people believe that his way of doing in his family was for their own good, yet they were not willing to follow his example. The children did not attend school any more that summer. He made a wooden fork for Elgie, the rest being able to handle steel forks, and with his children following in the rear he marched to the hayfield and set them all to work. When he came to build the haystack he would put Mrs. Howard on top and make her build it, as he did not consider the children capable of doing it. She repeatedly told him she was not able to build a haystack, but he commanded her to do as he told her, and she obeyed. As they were about finishing the stack Leonard Cottrel came along. "For God's sake, Mrs. Howard, come down from that stack, for I see that you are ready to faint away," said he. He assisted her to get down, and as she reached the ground she fainted away. They carried her to the house, laid her on the bed, and it was weeks before she left it. The doctor made excuses, and said she would have been sick if she had not built the stack, but he was kind to her during her illness.

At times, to all appearances, he seemed to have a remorse of conscience. He did all of his own tailoring, and also that of his son Wallace, but he would not make his son's clothing different from his own, and the poor boy would often cry with mortification, but all to no purpose.

CHAPTER XL.

ELGIE HOWARD STRANGLED BY BY HER FATHER—BUYING THE LOOM.

Little Elgie Howard was in the habit of going with her mother when she went from home. This morning Mrs. Howard went to one of her neighbors on an errand, not intending to be absent more than half an hour. Ardeela and Mina knew this, but they wanted to tease Elgie, and told her that their mother was going to remain all day. She began to cry, as it was a new thing for her to be left at home, and finally her father heard her. He inquired of Ardeela as to the cause, and she told him Elgie was crying because her mother had gone and left her. He turned, and angrily told her to stop crying; but though she made a strong effort to do so, she could not. Her father grabbed up an apron, and catching hold of her, he stuffed it into her mouth until Elgie turned purple in the face. Just then Mrs. Howard arrived. "My God, Dr. Howard, are you choking my child to death?" she exclaimed, and quickly catching hold of the apron pulled it out of her

mouth. Elgie gasped and fell into her mother's arms unconscious. The child would sob, but could not speak. Dr. Howard saw plainly what his terrible temper had lead him to do, and said to his wife, "It is well you came when you did. I was not aware of punishing her so severely."

"Doctor, I fear the same cloud which has darkened my pathway through life thus far, is going to follow Elgie. Would that I could lay her in her little grave. Ardeela hates her just as my mother did me, and the poor child will have both you and Ardeela to combat with."

Ardeela and Mina felt terrible when they found their father was choking Elgie, and were very sorry they had told her a falsehood. Mrs. Howard concluded that in the future she should take Elgie with her when she left home, and did so until she was quite a large girl.

Dr. Howard decided to make his mother a visit in Pennsylvania, his father having died some three years previous, and concluded to take Ardeela and Wallace with him. Wallace was dressed in a long overcoat that reached to his heels, slashed in the back, with a high stiff collar. At that time the ruling fashion was sack coats. Mrs. Howard dressed Ardeela as best she could, with the material she had, and all things being in readiness, they started on a five weeks' visit. Elgie and Mina were rejoiced when they were gone, for they intended having a good time during their father's absence. The doctor engaged Harvey Russell to attend to the chores and build fires while he was gone. Those were happy evenings for Mrs.

Howard, as she gathered her two little children around the hearthstone. The hickory logs were crackling in the fireplace, the sparks flying and lighting the room, while Orlena Drounly with Elgie and Mina were playing around the room. Mrs. Howard looked at the children and said, "Would that our lives could always be so calm."

At the end of the five weeks Dr. Howard returned, bringing with him two presents for his wife from her brother-in-law, Lewis Howard, which consisted of a pocket Bible and a deck of cards. The doctor said he had a fine visit; but Wallace and Ardeela said they had not, as they made fun of their clothing. Mrs. Howard cried, for she knew how badly her children must have felt. Wallace said they laughed at his muskrat cap. Their mother told them to cheer up, and she would try and find some plan to dress them better. That evening the doctor taught his children to play cards, so Wallace would get tired of it and never become a gambler, and it had the desired effect. He forbade their playing when away from home, but at the same time did not consider it any more harm to play cards than checkers, or chess, so long as they played for amusement only, and he allowed them to play at home whenever they wished to do so.

Mrs. Howard asked the doctor to buy her a loom. He at first refused, but finally consented on condition that she would refund the money to him as soon as she had earned it. She agreed to do this, and the loom was bought. It was for the sake of her children that she undertook the task

of weaving. Judge Collens' daughter and a doctor's wife placed at the loom! She was frail but a true mother. The first money she earned she paid to her husband, and continued doing so until she had paid him the full price of the loom. Doctor Howard told the neighbors that his wife had gone into the weaving business, but it was much against his wishes. They told him they thought she did it in order to get clothing for his children, as he certainly did not clothe them decently. He replied:

"I am not bound to ask my neighbors how I shall clothe my children."

"But," said Mr. Sterling, "you have a duty to perform which God will call you to account for," and, concluding his remarks, he said: "You had better think deeply and seriously of this, doctor."

This affronted Dr. Howard, and it was a long time before he and Mr. Sterling again became friends.

The first money Mrs. Howard earned after paying for the loom was spent in buying corn-colored goods for Ardeela and Mina dresses, and Mina a pink sunbonnet. Elgie went with her mother to Mr. McKee's store to make the purchase. Mr. McKee said: "Are you not going to buy curly head something?" To which Mr. Howard replied: "Not to-day. I have not got the money." Mr. McKee then took down a piece of pink calico, and, cutting off two yards, gave them to Elgie. Tears of gratitude and joy sprang to the eyes of the poor child as she kissed the package containing the nice pink calico. She looked up and said,

"Thank you," and as the tears glistened in her eyes Mr. McKee said to her kindly:

"Never mind, Elgie, I am more than paid for the calico."

Ardeela made up the dresses, and the sun-bonnet for Mina. And there was enough of the corn-colored goods to make a bonnet for Elgie, with a frill one finger in width. The next Sunday, the children went to Sabbath-school with their new clothes on. As they entered the class, the scholars began laughing at Elgie's yellow sun-bonnet, and as soon as she discovered it, she walked out and went home crying, and said she would not attend Sabbath-school any more. Mrs. Howard said she would get all of them bonnets as soon as possible, and Elgie wore her yellow bonnet out in the field to work. In a few weeks Mrs. Howard had earned enough to get them chip bonnets, which were all the style. She trimmed Ardeela's and Mina's in ribbon, for they were the older, and put black and green calico on Elgie's. Poor Elgie started to Sabbath school again, but upon taking her seat, the scholars again commenced laughing at the trimming on her bonnet. She immediately arose and started to leave the class, but Mrs. Dunbar, her teacher, persuaded her to remain. She sat down and recited her lesson, but as soon as Sabbath-school closed, she started for home, while Ardeela and Mina remained for church. As she went along, she said to herself, "This long dress down to my heels! Aint I a pretty sight? Mabell and Sadell Cranelin with their short dresses, how pretty they look. I will tell Mina not to go

to church until she can wear short dresses and pantalets." Just as she finished saying what she thought to herself, her mother came along. She told her the tale of sorrow, and also her future intentions. Her mother said she had done the best she could for them for the present, but in a few weeks she would manage to get ribbons for her bonnet. Mina had outgrown one of her dresses, so her mother made her pantalets. She then Elgie a dress of a shrimp pattern, and made pantalets to wear with it. Mrs. Howard had Mina and Elgie dressed when the doctor came in, and he at once commenced to "storm." She told him that Mina had outgrown her dress, and that she had made Elgie's of a scrimp pattern. The doctor said nothing more, and after that Mrs. Howard dressed her children as other children in the neighborhood were dressed. Sometimes the doctor would be very pleasant for a number of days; then, again, he would be so petulant and fault-finding that his family could scarcely live with him. Mrs. Howard soon had to support the family. All that the doctor would do, was to furnish each of them with a coarse pair of shoes, and provide the flour and meat, and give her the proceeds, or the wool sometimes, from twenty sheep. The balance she had to provide, whether sick or well, assisted by her children.

Winter was approaching. The well known "houk" of the wild geese was heard, as they soared above the tree-tops, on their way to the south. The evening song of the robin was but faintly heard, as was also the trill of the blackbird

high in the air. The leaves of the trees and flowers were falling gently to the ground. The sheep in the fields were bleating for shelter, and everything seemed to feel the coming of winter.

Elgie was looking forward to attending school during the winter, with her sisters and brother, and school opened on the first day of December. Elgie's heart bounded with joy, as she took her spelling book in her hand and trudged to school with Wallace and Mina. At the end of three weeks her father told her that she could not go to school any more that winter, as he needed her at home, to assist in watering cattle and doing chores.

CHAPTER XLI.

ELGIE HOWARD FREEZES HER FEET. — ELGIE'S FRIGHT.

There had been a heavy fall of snow, and the sleighbells were jingling far and near. Elgie, dressed in a flannel dress, with her little hood and shawl, trudged along after the cattle through the deep snow, while her father went in advance of her to cut the ice, so that the cattle could get water to drink. She stood in the snow until her feet were frozen, as she had to wait to help her father drive the cattle home again. The little snow-birds were hopping hither and thither from one snow-drift to another, then into the bushes or on the fence. While she stood watching them, she said:

"I wish I were a snow-bird,
Then I would be so free;
Could hop on every snow drift,
Also into the tree.
I would not have to follow
The cattle through the cold,
Nor listen to my father's
Everlasting scold;
And then I would be merry—
For happy I should be,
Singing my little song
Of chick-a-chick-a-dee."

And thus she mused, unconscious of the condition of her feet, until they were frozen beyond feeling. She drove the cattle home again, though scarcely able to follow them. She waded along, however, and when she reached home, she then began to realize what it was to have frozen feet. She suffered greatly, and the flesh came off from her heels to the bone. Her father compelled her to drive the cattle to Ballqueather swamp the balance of the winter, which made it very hard for poor Elgie.

The doctor did his threshing with the old-fashioned flail, instead of having it done with a machine; and consequently the wheat had all to be run through a fanning mill to get it clean. Wallace and Mina were taken from school to assist Elgie in cleaning the wheat. They almost froze to death in the barn, but their father scolded them if they complained to their mother, who was ever dear to them, and always ready to sympathize with them in the hardships which their father in his tyranny placed upon them.

These same transactions occurred every year. Sometimes Elgie would have the privilege of at-

tending school five weeks in a whole year. She was quick to learn and every opportunity offered was used to the best advantage. And yet, if Dr. Howard had a favorite among his children, Elgie was the one. She was the pet of her mother, because she was of good disposition and frail in health. The doctor was clearing his last field, and, one evening in the spring, he lighted the fires in order to burn the brush, and, leaving them, started for the village. Wallace and Mina thought as their mother and Ardeela were absent, they would have some fun and frighten Elgie. They asked her to go with them and see the bonfires, and of course she was anxious to go. When they got into the field, the fires had gone down, and left nothing but black, charred stumps. They told Elgie that the stumps were bears, and that they would catch her, and turning back they ran home, leaving Elgie standing in the field. She screamed with fright, and also ran home, thinking the bears were after her. When she reached home, Willis Griffith caught her in his arms, and, carrying her into the house, he laid her on the bed. Wallace and Mina saw at once that they had done wrong, and, with the help of Willis Griffith, they tried to convince her that there were no bears; but still she screamed, "The bear will get me." When Mrs. Howard returned she asked Elgie what was the matter, but she would not tell on Mina and Wallace, except that she was afraid. The shock caused by being so badly frightened, threw Elgie into severe convulsions, and she was given up to die. It was a lesson to Wallace and Mina, for it

was a long time before she recovered, and their father never knew the cause of her illness.

There was a pond that covered an acre and a half in the field back of the house. This made a nice skating park in the winter time. The young ladies and gentlemen, as well as the children, would gather on the ice and spend the evening in skating. The doctor would not allow his children to be out on the ice later than nine o'clock at night. When nine o'clock came his shrill voice could be heard calling his children home. They knew they must obey at once, and would coax the playmates to go home with them and spend an hour or more in playing, "presents and advice," "bird," "spat them out," etc. The doctor loved company, even though but children. These evenings to Elgie were rays of sunshine through the clouds of her life. Elgie was now eleven years old.

Dr. Howard told his wife that he was going to build a new house, and wanted her to make a plan to suit herself. She accordingly made the draft, and handed it to him. The doctor then engaged Mr. Vanduzen, the carpenter, and when the carpenters began work, the doctor ordered him to build it as he directed him to do, which proved to be the very contrary of his wife's plan. He compelled his wife and children to carry wood half a mile to cook with, while the horses were idle, and he stood and gave his orders to the workmen. They felt sorry for Mrs. Howard and Elgie, and before going to their work, would get up early in the morning and carry the wood for Mrs. Howard,

to use. The doctor said his wife could cook with shavings, and that it was not necessary to have wood.

Elgie always clung to her mother. Her mother's sorrows were also Elgie's, and Mrs. Howard took a great deal of comfort in the thought that she had at least one child in her family whose heart-strings were touched with sympathy for her in the dark hours of her life.

That summer Mina and Elgie assisted their brother Wallace to do all the farm work, while Mrs. Howard and Ardeela attended to the house-work. Dr. Howard came home one day, and attempted to strike his wife with a whip, when for the first time she made an effort to defend herself. Standing against the wall, she cried, "Dr. Howard I have lived in darkness long enough The world shall know all, though I die at your feet." With this she raised a weapon with her weak and trembling arm, and called to Mr. Vanduzen to come to her assistance. As he stepped upon the porch, the doctor laid down the whip and begged Vanduzen not to tell the story. Dr. Howard knew that the story had long been kept by his family, and he must plan some way to still longer keep it within his walls. He went that night, and bought a calico dress and a large mirror for Mrs. Vanduzen, and told the merchant it was for his wife.

A few days after Mrs. Howard went to the same store to buy Ardeela a dress. She took one off from the same piece that Dr. Howard had bought from.

"Why, that is just like the one that the doctor bought you. How did you like it? And your mirror, how do you like that? asked Mr. Barnard.

"I have seen neither the dress or the mirror," replied Mrs. Howard.

"That is strange. He said that he was buying them for you," said Mr. Barnard.

On the following day Mrs. Howard said nothing to the doctor, but sent Elgie over to Mr. Vanduzen's. Mrs. Vanduzen showed Elgie the presents, and told her that her father had sent them to her. Of course Mrs. Howard knew it was hush-money. When their new home was being built, Mrs. Howard requested her husband not to have fire-places in the house, as they were liable to smoke, and she greatly preferred a cooking stove. But, as a matter of course, he built the fireplaces. The house was finished, and the doctor dedicated it with a dance, as he did not consider a dance in a private dwelling anything more than a pleasant pastime.

CHAPTER XLII.

GRUMBLE HALL—MINA AND ELGIE MAKE SUGAR

Dr. Howard gave his new dwelling the title of Grumble Hall, and a very appropriate title it was. After the dedication they left the log cabin and became occupants of the new home. The loom was placed in the kitchen and a fire kindled in the fire-place, with the smoke, as usual, descending to

the floor, fulfilling Mrs. Howard's predictions. She entreated him to get her a cook stove, as she feared the smoke would make her blind. But all to no purpose; he would not buy her a stove, so she had to endure the smoke. In the spring he opened the sugar camp, which was located one mile from home, there being forty acres of woodland dividing Dr. Howard's land. The doctor placed Elgie and Mina to boil sap. At 8 o'clock in the evening he told Mina and Elgie that he was tired, and would go home and go to bed. They begged of him to remain with them, for they were afraid in that lone woods. He replied:

"I want to learn you to be brave; there is nothing here that will hurt you." With this he disappeared in the woodland, and Elgie and Mina were alone. Presently an owl hooted, and Elgie trembling with fear asked, "What is that?"

"I think it is an owl," said Mina. "We will listen."

"I feel afraid, but we must make the best of it."

They rolled the log close up to the fire and sat down on it, with their arms around each other, trembling at every sound. To add to their horror it was not long before they heard the barking of a hound, and at a little distance from them they discovered three hunters who were out setting traps for muskrats.

"If they see us what will we do?"

"They may hurt us and they may not," said Mina.

"Let us go home, Mina," said Elgie.

"Oh, we dare not. You know father would



punish us severely if we were to leave the sap. We will get the axe and poker." Mina then took the axe and Elgie the poker, and prepared for defense if necessary. Just then they heard the footsteps of some one stirring in the leaves in the distance, and, to their great joy, their mother came in sight, and was soon at their side. That true mother! As soon as Dr. Howard reached home and informed his wife that he had left the girls to stay all night in the woods alone, she started against his will to go to them. The great anxiety of mind as she thought of her children bore her on with untiring steps. She could scarcely see a step before her, but on she went over fences and through the brush, with no thought save that of reaching her children and securing them from harm. She knew the woods were full of hunters, and did not know what might befall her children alone in the woods. All fears were at once dispelled when they saw their mother, for they felt that they were now safe. Soon after Mrs. Howard reached her girls, the hunters came up, and said they saw the fire and supposed it was a camp-fire. They asked for a drink of sap, which was given them. Mrs. Howard watched them closely, for she did not like their looks, though they seemed very kind, and said they thought it must be lonely for women to be alone in the woods at night, after which they quietly took their departure.. The owl took up its mournful hoot, while the screech-owl joined its voice in making the night hideous. Elgie and Mina sat and talked to their mother, and asked

her why their father had family worship and asked a blessing, when he was such an unkind father and husband.

Mrs. Howard replied, "I think he prays to see if God will make a better man of him. But God in his mercy has not seen fit, so far, to answer his prayer. Your father has a terrible disposition to combat, and I pray to God that he may meet with a change of heart before he is called to his long home. Always treat him with respect, for he is your father, although he does not treat you as a father should do. The Bible teaches us to 'honor thy father and thy mother,' and in the end it will be better for us all."

After sugar-making was over, Mrs. Howard planted an orchard to the right of Grumble Hall, extending it in front to the roadway. To the left of the path that led to Grumble Hall were some pear and plum trees, and a bed of asparagus; on each side of the portico there stood a lone pine, and upon that side of the farm to which the house fronted was an osage-orange fence its entire length. The house was furnished in a manner which, according to the ideas and tastes of Dr. Howard, was very fine, but not pleasing to his wife or children.

About this time there was a Mr. Rugal came into the neighborhood from Columbus and purchased forty acres of land on Wasset creek. Mr. Rugal's family consisted of his wife, himself, and a son and daughter. Mr. Rugal's business was that of stage agent. and he remained in Columbus while his family went to the farm. Shortly after

leaving her city home for a log cabin on Wasset creek. Mrs. Rugal obtained a divorce, the decree giving her the children. She also obtained the forty acres of land, upon which there was a mortgage of five hundred dollars. The Rugal and Howard families soon became fast friends, Wallace and Henry Rugal being almost inseparable, while his sister Helen and Elgie and Mina Howard were constant companions. Orlena Drounly and Helen and Henry Rugal spent most of their spare time at the Hall. In the summer time, Orlena, Mina, and Elgie would ride the horses to Wasset creek to water. Grumble Hall was a favorite resort of the young people, as well as the older ones of the neighborhood, and Mrs. Howard was glad to entertain them for two reasons: First, they were good society for the children; second, so long as strangers were guests Doctor Howard would treat his family with the greatest deference and care, being very cautious not to be unkind to them. But when there was a day in which they were alone, he would give vent to his pent up feelings and visit his spite upon Mina and Elgie, or upon Wallace and Ardeela.

When the Free-soil party was organized Dr. Howard was one of the first to support it. He felt that God never intended that the colored people should be slaves for the whites, and thought that the slave driver's whip should be laid aside. His sympathy with the poor slave in bondage was sincere, and he hoped that the time was not far distant when the poor colored man could say his soul

was his own. This subject he warmly debated at the club and with his neighbors everywhere.

CHAPTER XLIII.

BUYING A COOKSTOVE—ELGIE AND MINA VISIT THEIR GRANDMOTHER.

Winter was again approaching. The swallow had ceased to dive down over the meadows, and could be seen seeking winter quarters in the barn. The cry of the coon was heard in the cornfield; the bullfrog had ceased his croaking, and the leaves had fallen from the trees. Boreas with his rude blast was sweeping round their humble and unhappy home, making the evenings melancholy for Mrs. Howard, for she and Elgie were often alone. The doctor who had been to the village, had returned home one evening, and Mrs. Howard said to him: "Doctor, I am losing my eyesight, working in that smoke; and to have the door part way open to prevent the chimney from smoking is too cold, and makes my rheumatism worse. Will you lend me the money to buy a cookstove?"

The doctor replied, "I will not," and Mrs. Howard said, "All right."

The next morning, lame and sick, she went to the log cabin on Wasset creek, and borrowed the money from Henry Rugal. Mrs. Howard then hired his horse and buggy, to go to Wartell. When she was ready to start, who should place

himself beside her but her husband. The doctor mistrusted that she was going to buy a stove, and he was determined to pick it out. He compelled her to take the one he had chosen for her, although it did not suit her. He said, "This one, or none, shall come into my house."

The dark cloud was still hovering over her, and as she kneeled that night in prayer she prayed: "Oh, Lord, my hopes in this life are forever blasted, and I am a weary pilgrim. Enable me to bear whatever thou seest fit to put upon me, and while I may fail in the patience and endurance of my trials which thou wouldst have me, forgive my shortcomings and gather me and my flock around the throne of heaven, through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ." She then prepared for bed, feeling that God in His mercy would not forsake her.

People came from far and near to visit Grumble Hall. They would say, "Your father is eccentric, Elgie, but you must all be happy, for he is such good company, and is so kind to his family. I notice that when he speaks to your mother he always says, 'dear.'"

Poor Elgie longed to tell the truth of their abuse, but she did not dare to do so, for her father had said he would inflict the most dire punishment upon any member of his family who would speak to any one of his cruelty. He said he would master his own family or die in the attempt. Ardeela left home at the age of twenty-two to sew for the neighbors. Elgie was glad when she left, for her hatred toward Elgie continued, and Ar-

deela was always finding fault with her. Elgie would never leave her mother alone with her father, as she did not think it was safe to do so. When Elgie and Mina went to singing-school or to a party, Mrs. Rugal or Mrs. Cottrel would remain at Grumble Hall. This, of course, was accidental in appearance.

Elgie and Mina Howard were not beauties, but were called handsome girls. They were what nature had made them, for no artificial powder ever disfigured their cheeks. They were affable, honest young ladies, wherever they were met, and at all times they were the same; and some of the best and most talented young men waited upon them—some for the sake of their society, others with a view and hope of obtaining them for wives. For a long time they both thought single life more happy than married life, judging all men by their own father.

The doctor told his family one morning that he was intending to visit his mother soon, and this time he would take Mina and Elgie with him. The girls were delighted, and as there were no railroads in those days they were obliged to travel by private conveyance. Mina and Elgie had never seen any of their relatives belonging to their father's family, except a cousin, and now to see their grandmother, aunts, and uncles, was something great. They had never been farther from home than Wartell. Esq. Baily offered him his double carriage free of charge, but the doctor would not accept it. He said that he preferred the wagon. Elgie and Mina were disappointed,

but were determined to go. The seats on the wagon were set on hickory poles for springs. Their father told them to take lunch along for dinner, and he would buy their breakfasts and suppers. On the morning of the 1st day of March, they bid their mother, brother, and sister good bye, and started on their journey two hours before daylight. At sunrise they were five miles from home.

Spring opened early, and the leaves were peeping from the trees, and everything had a bright appearance as they traveled along. They had looked forward to this visit as one they should ever, perhaps, through their lives remember. When evening came they were forty miles from home. They then put up at a hotel in Lisbonville for the night, and all were very tired. The hotel was kept by an old bachelor and his two sisters. They were very much pleased with the appearance of Elgie, and urged Dr. Howard to leave her with them, and they would educate her, and at their death would make her sole heir to their estate. The doctor would not agree to this, and Elgie was not anxious to remain. When the doctor retired he requested the landlord to awaken him at 4 o'clock in the morning. He did so, and they started on their journey without their breakfast. Mina and Elgie told their father that they were hungry, but he did not seem to hear them. They opened the satchel and ate the lunch that was intended for their dinners. The second day they reached Chambersburg, and put up at the hotel. Mina and Elgie were tired riding, and be-

gan to think that their relatives in Pennsylvania would have to be very valuable and treat them with the utmost kindness, if they were paid for their trip. The doctor ordered supper, and a delicious meal it was, for the girls were almost starved, they thought.

The next morning they were awakened early and started without their breakfast as usual. Their lunch was all gone. After riding along they told their father that they were getting very hungry, but, as usual, his deafness again came on him and he could not hear them. Elgie then said:

"Father, Mina and I are starving, and we are getting the headache," but he was still deaf, and she again repeated the same to him.

"Stop bothering me," he said. "I am not going to waste my money buying you something to eat. You will get your supper when we come to the river."

At 6 o'clock they came to the river, that beautiful stream which their mother, as Julia Collens, had so often crossed. They put up until after supper, intending to cross the river that night. The ice had broken loose and was floating down stream, but Dr. Howard was anxious to cross as it was Saturday night and they would then only be five miles from his mother's home. He was told by the ferryman that to cross the river that night would be impossible, so his pocketbook had to again be opened to pay for another night's lodging and their breakfasts. The girls laughed, for they were glad of it.

The next day they had the company of a young

gentleman who was the son of Mr. Blackburn, an old friend of their mother's. Mr. Blackburn, in company with two young ladies, was also waiting to cross the river. When dinner was announced he saw that Dr. Howard did not invite his daughters to go with him, so he urged them to take dinner and he would pay the bill. They thanked him for his kindness, but they knew they dare not accept the offer. After dinner the captain of the boat told them that he would take them across the river, but that they would have to go down the stream to an eminence, as he could not get the boat to the shore at the proper place. They drove to the spot designated. The wagon was let down on the boat by ropes, and the horses were led down and placed on board. Then the captain told Mina to jump and he would catch her, and landed her safe on the boat. He then came for Elgie, who did not do as well as her sister, as she went into the river, and the captain caught her just as her feet went into the water. Placing her on board they dressed her feet in dry stockings. She was not injured, but took a severe cold. The captain was very kind to her; he was sorry the accident occurred, but he wished them a pleasant time, and said he hoped they would call at his ferry when they returned. They landed safe and were soon on the road, arriving at their grandmother's about 5 o'clock. When they drove up to the house Grandma Howard was standing in the door.

"How do you do, mother? Get supper as soon as convenient, for we are very hungry."

"Why, Arthur, is that you?" said his mother, and coming out to the wagon, she put her arms around his neck. Her darling boy had come.

"And there are Mina and Elgie," said their father.

"I am glad to see you, my dears," said their grandma.

Aunt Jennie put in her appearance, and soon began giving the doctor a lecture for not coming in a carriage. The doctor replied, "I carry my brains in my head. I don't live to please the world. I believe in pleasing myself. I spend my money to visit my friends, if I don't come in style."

"I would prefer you to stay at home, Arthur, if you cannot come like other folks," replied Jennie.

This pleased Elgie and Mina, and they laughed heartily. Dr. Howard had met a mate from his home nest. He said, "Jennie, hurry the supper." She disappeared, and in a short time they were at the table, which was filled with plenty. After supper was over, they all sat down to talk, and the doctor asked his mother to go and spend the balance of her life with him, as he said he did not think Lewis provided amply for her. The doctor did not think when he asked his mother that she would accept the invitation, and did not want to have her do so, but merely spoke to her in that way to still retain the foothold of being her favorite son. His mother told him she would go, and he immediately began to say, "I have something to lay before you. First the wagon is hard to

ride in, and it is a long journey, and as you are seventy years of age, I fear it will be too much for you. You must consider all this, and not act too hastily."

"You are a very considerate child, Arthur; I will not go, for when I leave this world, I want to be laid by the side of your father;" and so it was settled.

Mina and Elgie had a fine visit among their cousins. The doctor then concluded to visit some relatives at the foot of the mountains. The farewells were said, and Dr. Howard seated himself in his wagon, with Mina and Elgie on a seat behind him, where they were laughing and making fun of the vehicle. They told their cousins to come in a gypsy wagon, when they returned their visit. The doctor told them that to pay them for their being so saucy, he would leave them at home next time. Elgie said that he would be obliged to leave them at home, for by the time they got back, they would be dried beef if he starved them much more, and they took a quiet laugh behind their father's back. They reached the city of P——, where he once owned a clothing store. They entered the city just at sunrise, for they had traveled four miles that morning. As they were driving down Penn street, a man ran out and asked,

"Butter or cheese this morning?"

"Neither," the doctor replied, "we are just going to visit some friends."

After going a short distance, another man ran out, "Cheese this morning, Mister?"

"No, sir," replied the doctor.

Elgie and Mina were laughing to themselves all this time. Presently another man ran out and asked:

"Eggs this morning?"

"No, sir," again replied the doctor.

The girls could contain themselves no longer; they burst into a hearty laugh, for which their father gave them a lecture. Mina said:

"Father, this is as good as a circus."

He made no reply, but asked a young man which street he would take to go to Batie's hotel. He directed them which way to go, and the doctor thanked him and drove on. The young man walked along on the same street, and when Doctor Howard turned a corner he turned it also. The doetor did not notice he was the same young man who had directed him a few moments before, so he stopped and asked again what street the hotel was on. The young man directed him as before, and, looking at the girls, smiled very pleasantly. The doctor thanked him, while the girls were convulsed with laughter. He drove on, and when he turned the next corner the young man, who seemed to be going in the same direction, turned also. The doctor again called out:

"Young man, will you be so kind as to tell me which street will take me to Batie's hotel?"

The young man directed him, then said: "Stranger, if I give you directions a few times more, you will certainly be able to find Batie's hotel without further trouble."

The doctor saw the joke the girls were laughing

at. He whipped up his horses and asked no more questions. When they arrived at their aunt's, Mina told the joke to the gratification of all but Dr. Howard.

They had a grand visit, and returned home after aa absence of five weeks. The last day on their way home they had to walk seven miles. The horses had taken the distemper, and could scarcely travel. The girls would give a description of their trip, and would say that they considered it equal to a circus; then they would smile and tell how worried they were about their father's deafness, while on their way to their grandma's. This the doctor did not really enjoy, as he had taken plenty of money with him, and knew that he ought to have got the girls something to eat.

CHAPTER XLIV.

ELGIE PAID FOR WORKING IN THE HARVEST FIELD.

Elgie had reached her fifteenth year. She had done her accustomed work with her brother and sister on the farm, and had assisted her mother in the house, nights and mornings. When haying time arrived, she was sent to the field with Mina to rake hay. Elgie soon began to complain of having a headache, and Mina told her to go and lie down behind a swath of grass. She did so, but had only been lying down a few moments when her father came along, and told her to get

up and go to work. Elgie said, "Father, I am not able to do it," and he said, "You will have to work, able or not; there will be a shower this afternoon, and the hay must be got up." She took the fork from her father's hand, and went to work, with a prayer that she might soon be laid to rest from this toilsome life. She struggled through the forenoon, rolling the hay in windrows. When their mother called them to dinner, Mina took her by one arm and Wallace by the other,, and helped her to get home. She ate no dinner but went to bed.

Poor Elgie! Five long weeks she lay with bilious fever, and by the time she had recovered, harvest was ended. Mina always had strength to go through what Elgie could not. The doctor did not allow his daughters to keep company, or go with gentlemen, to whom he in any way took a dislike, so they were always in fear, when they accepted gentlemen's company whom their father did not fancy, that he would insult them.

It was getting late in the season of the year, and everything was putting on the peculiar appearance which the autumn months bring with them. The balmy, autumn air was blowing soft and still. The trees were casting their hues of red and yellow, making the woods look beautiful, a forcible reminder that the halycon days of summer were dying, and, like the leaves of the trees, fading in their own loveliness to pass into oblivion and join the many mysteries with which our earth abounds. The cat-bird began its fitful wail, the modest quails were traveling in bevies over the meadows, and

the "caw, caw," of the crow as he alighted on the fence was a warning that our autumn was at hand.

This was the time also for parties, and the doctor was asked to have a young folks' dance. He said he had no objections, if they did not invite more than twelve couples. That law and limit would not of course include more than one-half of their associates. Their father always said when he extended an invitation to any one and the invited ones had company he preferred them to bring whoever might be with them along to Grumble Hall rather than remain at home. Elgie knew this, so she started out on her mission. She would go and tell one family to spend the evening with a family that was invited to the Hall on the night of the party. As evening drew near Mrs. Howard felt somewhat uneasy; so did the rest of the family. Elgie told them that she would take the blame if it came out. Henry Rugal and his sister Helen, accompanied by Cyrus Young and the two Miss Smyths, rapped at the Hall door. Answering the knock at the door, Elgie opened it, and said, "How do you do? Come in."

"I cannot until I see the doctor," was the reply.

Elgie called her father.

"Good evening, Dr. Howard. We had company this evening and had to remain at home or bring them with us."

"All right," said the doctor, "Come in."

It was not long before more of the guests arrived in the same predicament. "Come in, by

all means," said the doctor, and in that way all the young folks became guests at the Hall, and the doctor never mistrusted that Elgie had a hand in it.

The most pleasant parties of the neighborhood were held at Grumble Hall. After a time it became known that Dr Howard was unkind to his wife and children in more ways than one. Some one asked Ardeela one day whether her father was insane or not.

"I do not know," she replied. "He is a very eccentric man, I know that." And the very person who asked Ardeela whether her father was not insane, told him that his daughter Ardeela had said the her father was insane. This so enraged the doctor that he told his wife if they ever made an attempt to put him an asylum, when he got out he would murder the whole family, and escape the gallows on the plea of insanity. He also told her if she obtained a divorce from him he would kill her and then kill himself, for he would not live without her. Elgie was often asked how she could be so cheerful in society, when she had so much trouble at home.

She replied, "I leave my trouble behind me, for I know I shall find it when I return."

She would gather wild myrtle in the woods to trim Mina's and her white dresses. After working hard all day they would sit up till 12 o'clock at night to put on the trimming, as it was the only time they had to do any work for themselves.

Winter by this time was full upon them. The snow was falling, and the children were busy

building snow-houses. Everything seemed to have prepared winter quarters, but the rabbit which could be seen jumping in the fence corners, and the little snowbird, whose twittering could be heard from the bare branches of the trees.

Mrs. Howard had an old acquaintance who married a man by the name of Pollard, and he with his family settled on a farm three miles from Grumble Hall. Mr. Pollard's children, Harper, Ira, and Ina, were frequent visitors at Dr. Howard's when not engaged in teaching school. They would often return home with Elgie and Mina, and practice singing a few hours, after which they would engage in a few games of whist or euchre before going to bed. This helped in a measure to while away some of the tedious hours. Wallace did not take trouble to heart as his sisters did, but he enjoyed society as well. Ardeela visited her home once in five or six weeks, and would remain a day or two, then return to her sewing again. She frequently gave Elgie a lecture on her behavior, telling her that she was too forward, or that she was not forward enough, and that she was her mother's angel and her father's pet (if he had any), and that people thought Elgie was good-looking, but she did not think so, and if she did she would not tell it. She wished Wallace and Mina would not like her, then she would be happy. She would close her remarks with the hope that she would never set her eyes on Elgie again. Elgie could never please Ardeela do what she would. When Ardeela went away Elgie would say, "Amen. I wonder when I shall

receive another lecture. I must pay her. I cannot take her services for nothing."

Ardeela was always jealous of Elgie, and yet Elgie was ready at any time to do anything in her power for her sister Ardeela. Mina said that she would stay at home that winter and let Elgie attend school. School was to open the 1st of December, and a gentleman by the name of Harrington was engaged as teacher. Dr. Howard's family were becoming scattered, as there were at home none but the doctor, his wife, Mina and Elgie, with a little dog called Mago, Wallace having left home on his twenty-first birthday, forbidden ever to enter his father's house again. One week before Wallace had attained his majority his father asked him to buy the farm, on these conditions: Wallace was to pay $3,000 for the farm, and to work it out under his father's control, and not get married before the farm was paid for. He gave his son his choice—buy on these conditions or leave the Hall forever. And as Wallace would not agree to the conditions upon which his father wished him to purchase the farm, he left the Hall.

Elgie started to school the first day of December. When she entered the school-room, hung up her shawl and hood, and then sat down and took her spelling-book, Mr. Harrington went round to each of the scholars to ascertain their names and what books they were going to study. When he came to Elgie he asked her what her name was? She replied, "Elgie Snivelingiser."

"That is a very strange name," said the teacher.

"Yes, it is; I don't know of any person by that name except our own family," she said.

"What are you going to study, Miss Snivelingiser?" asked the teacher.

"The spelling book," she replied, "but I have attended school very little, not more than one hundred and thirty-five days in all."

"It may perhaps embarrass you to read before the school, so you may read in your seat, when the boys are out at recess," said Mr. Harrington.

"Thanks for your kindness," she replied.

At recess he sat down beside her, she opened the spelling book, and began to spell "p-a pa, p-i pi, p-o po." The girls back of her commenced laughing, and Mr. Harrington scolded them, for he thought they were making fun of her; he turned to the reading matter, and asked her to read this sentence: "Fire burns wood and coal." Elgie made the attempt, but would spell some of the words before she would pronounce them.

He then said: "Please spell some words that I will pronounce," and he gave the word "baker," which she spelt. He also pronounced "shady," but she told him she could not spell that, until he spelled it for her. She then asked if he would excuse her from reading again until afternoon.

"Certainly, Miss Snivelingiser," he said.

Noon came, and at 1 o'clock the bell rang for school. He called the class in the Rhetorical reader. Elgie came with them and took her seat at the head of the class; and, to the surprise of the teacher, when he called upon her to read, he found her the best reader in the school, and could

not help laughing, as he plainly saw the joke she had played upon him. He at once became suspicious of the name she had given him in the morning. When he called the roll that evening, he called the name Elgie, and then stopped, and a little boy that sat near him said "Howard." He then looked at her and smiled. When he dismissed school he asked Elgie the privilege of boarding at her father's house that week, if she thought it would suit her parents. She said she thought they would have no objections, so he accompanied her home that evening. Mr. Harrington told them the joke that Elgie had played on him. The doctor said:

"That is just like Elgie."

She replied: "Well, father, the dark cloud hangs over me so much of the time that I thought I would have a little sunshine."

Elgie soon became the favorite of the school and teacher. He waited upon her some, and spent many evenings at the Hall, unsuspected by her father. Mr. Harrington told Elgie that he was engaged to be married, but that engagements were often broken. She thought her teacher was a very fine young man, and was becoming quite attached to him, for he was so very kind to her. Mrs. Howard had taught her daughters never to step in between two persons when engaged to be married, for if they did they would not be likely to prosper. Mr. Harrington had a comrade who urged Elgie to encourage Mr. Harrington in his suit, and told her she could get him if she would. But Elgie thought it would be wrong for her to

do so, and wrong for him to break his engagement, so she did not encourage him.

This was a terrible winter for Mina and Elgie, for their father did not get over the story of his insanity, and was constantly blaming his wife as being the cause of Wallace leaving home, although he knew she was innocent. After they would retire he would threaten to take her life. For weeks Mina and Elgie would sleep on the floor with their ear over the stovepipe hole, which went through from the room below, in which her father and mother slept. Mina would take that position the fore part of the night, and Elgie the after part. Mrs. Howard told the girls not to tell what happened at home, as the people would not believe it if they should hear it; because their father was so desirous to have the slaves in the South liberated, they would say at once a man with such tender sympathies would not be capable of being unkind to his wife and family. With all his faults the doctor had his friends, as everyone does have in this life, whether he be worthy or unworthy of them.

School closed in the spring, and Elgie was taken sick with lung fever. Her father treated her case until he gave her up to die. He then called Dr. Morrell for counsel, and after a time she began slowly to recover. The wild geese were returning to their northern homes. The tame geese and ducks were swimming in the pond that had a short time before been used as a skating rink. The martens had almost forsaken their homes, and spent most of their time beneath the tiny waves.

The water cress stood defiant, as if to say, "Gather me if you can," and the modest pansy peeped forth in all its beauty among the spears of grass in the woodland. Elgie Howard looked at these and exclaimed: "A mockery to human life!" She thought, too, how hard their summer work would be, for their brother was gone and their mother was being reduced to a mere shadow with the trials of her life and hard work.

CHAPTER XLV.

INTRODUCTION TO DOCTOR DUNCAN.

One day Doctor Morrell called, accompanied by a gentleman whom he introduced to Dr. Howard and family as Doctor Duncan, and had brought him around to introduce him to his friends. They remained several hours, and before taking their leave Doctor Duncan said that his mother would arrive in a few days, and he should then be pleased to have them all call, as his mother would be a stranger among them. He seemingly had addressed the latter part of the conversation to Elgie, which greatly amused her, as she was the youngest of the family, and Doctor Duncan took her to be the oldest. Before Doctor Morrell left he and Doctor Howard had a private conversation. The day that Doctor Morrell moved away from Onoco, a team drove up to the house, and Doctor Morrell and Doctor Howard carried out the parlor furni-

ture and put it in the wagon. Mrs. Howard asked him what he was doing that for. "To spite you and the girls," he replied.

Dr. Duncan became a fast friend of the Howard family, and was often at the Hall. He admired Dr. Howard for his talent, but despised his treatment of his family. Dr. Howard told the girls he should hire no help, so they would have double the work to see to, as their brother was gone. Their father then told them if they worked well, he would give them some money at the close of harvest. They knew his word was good, and consequently worked very hard. They would arise very early and assist their feeble mother all they possibly could. Elgie, with Mago at her side, would drive the cows to the woodland to pasture, and at 10 o'clock Mina and Elgie would go to the hayfield and make windrows of what was dry enough, and scatter the grass that had been cut, to dry.

One evening their father detained Mina in the hayfield and sent Elgie into the woods for the cattle. There were hundreds of acres of woodland in a body, called commons, and here all the cattle of the village of Onoco pastured. Elgie called Mago and started. Weary and tired she would drag her feet along through the woods, sometimes seating herself on a log to rest, for she could go no farther. Mago would put his paws on her lap and whine, as if to say, "I feel sorry for you." The pheasant drumming upon the logs made a mournful sound in the forest. As darkness came on she could hear the lowing of the cattle

in the distance and hear the tinkle of the bells. She then hurried her footsteps as fast as she could, for she was afraid. Little Mago walked by her side as if to guard her from danger. It was late in the evening when she reached the cattle, and calling them to her, she soon started them ahead. She had a long road home over logs and through the brush, with but a glimmer of a few stars shining through the tree tops to light her way. She finally reached the lane and felt safe. She could hear the stage-driver sing as the stage rattled along the road. Elgie reached home just as the moon was rising, and found her mother and Mina anxiously waiting and watching for her. Mina milked the cows; when she had finished her father came out and told Mina and Elgie that they would have to drive the cattle to Wasset creek that night to water. Elgie asked her father whether he would vote the abolition ticket to free the Southern slaves; he said "Yes;" she then said that for her part she would much prefer to have the white slaves in the North freed first. He told her to go along and stop being so saucy.

That night Mina and Elgie laid their weary forms to rest at 12 o'clock. Soon after they had retired a fearful storm came up, and the wind was blowing a perfect hurricane. The lightning flashed on every side, and the loud peals of thunder shook the earth. They found the fences nearly all blown down next morning, and that most of the haycocks were blown to pieces; some of them being picked up and carried entirely out of sight. Elgie told her father the Lord sent the



storm to give her and Mina a rest. She said to him, "Father, it's an ill wind that blows nobody good."

When the harvest was ended and the wheat and oats in the barn, Dr. Howard called Elgie and Mina to him and said:

"Now, girls, you have worked well; I promised to give you some money," and gave them each fifty cents, and said, "You know your father always keeps his word."

The girls were disappointed, for they expected to receive at least five dollars. They were so enraged that they would have thrown the fifty cents in his face, but they thought of their poor mother, and how hard she had to work, and they needed the money. Elgie said, "I will take the five dollars out of him before four weeks; I will make him wish he had paid it to us."

As was the usual custom, the doctor had his party after harvest time. When the guests were seated, and her father was in the height of his glory, Elgie stepped to the center of the room, and asked Esquire Bailey if he was going West that fall.

"I am; I am going to visit my wife's brother," he replied.

Elgie continued: "Will you be kind enough to attend to some business for Mina and me?"

"I will be most happy to attend to anything you may wish me to do for your benefit," he replied.

"Well, Mina and I worked hard all through the harvest, and father has given us fifty cents apiece

for it, and we would like to have you lay it out in land for us," said Elgie.

"Good land," said Mr. Bailey, "he didn't give you all that!"

There was a perfect uproar of laughter, and Elgie left the room, while her father would have been glad if he could have sunk through the floor. As Elgie left the room she felt satisfied that she had taken the five dollars out of him.

Dr. Howard called Elgie to him the next morning, and told her that the next harvest-time she would have to work for nothing. She told him that she was glad of it; she did not want him to have the privilege of telling the neighbors he paid his girls for working in the harvest, when he did not give them enough to buy a calico dress. She said that it was not right that he should have the name and not the game.

CHAPTER XLVI.

MRS. HOWARD HEARS FROM HER RELATIVES—MINA AND ELGIE ATTEND A PARTY.

Mrs. Howard received a letter postmarked "Mosco, Ill." She hastily broke the seal and found it was from her brother Rollie. Rollie stated that his father's family had all gone to Illinois; that Mrs. Collens had given Zeno twenty thousand dollars, and that he had gone to California some four years previous, spent it all, and died penniless, and that his grave was dug in a solid

rock and covered with a slab. This, as his last resting place, was among the mines of gold. This was news to Julia. His letter further stated that Mrs. Howard's mother had laid away six hundred dollars to be given to Mrs. Howard at her death, "and, dear sister, I will see to it that you get it. My health is poor, and I am still living single. I would like to see you or any of your children.

"From your affectionate brother,

"ROLLIE COLLENS."

The following week there was to be a dance in a small village called Wallfield. Mina and Elgie received an invitation from a young gentleman by the name of Colton. As Mr. Colton was about to leave the house Dr. Howard returned from the village. He saw the young man as he left the house, and coming in asked the girls what he wanted. They told him, and he said he would not allow them to attend the dance with any one. The next evening they attended a party at Mr. Pollard's, and as they were returning from Mr. Pollard's Henry Rugal asked them to accompany him to the Wallfield party. Mina said they would like very much to go, but their father had forbidden them going with any one. Elgie told him they would go; that he should have the carriage ready, and they would come to his house and go from there, and as they were in the habit of staying two nights out of the week with Helen, their father would think nothing about it. Elgie told her mother in regard to the dance, and the plan they had arranged to go. Their friend, Mrs. Cottrell, came in and was to remain over night with

Mrs. Howard. The girls took the satchel, and put their dresses and slippers in the bottom and their night dresses on the top and covered them with a paper. They told their mother that they were going to take Mrs. Rugal some pippin apples. Dr. Howard was lying on a settee in the hall reading and overheard what had been said about getting the apples. He spoke to them and said: "I will go and help you gather the apples," but Mina told him that it was not necessary for him to go, and that she would get them.

He went, however, and Mina and Elgie followed with the satchel. When he put the apples into the satchel, he asked, "What is this?"

Elgie tremblingly replied, "Those are our night-dresses."

"So you are going to remain all night," said he.

"Yes, sir," said Elgie. "You need not put in more than a half dozen; she only wanted a few to eat, and they will be so heavy to carry, if you send so many."

"If you will take out your nightdresses and carry them in your hand, I can put in some other kinds."

But they said Mrs. Rugal only wanted a few of the pippins to taste, so he said no more. Elgie hastily picked up the satchel, and away she and Mina went. Elgie said:

"Mina, this is sunshine among the clouds."

"Yes, if the cloud don't darken before we get home," said Mina.

When they arrived at Mrs. Rugal's Henry was waiting for them. They gave Mrs. Rugal the ap-

ples, and started for the party. They took a back road, thinking that if they took the other road they might meet Dr. Howard taking a walk. The party was a grand affair, and after spending the time in the most delightful manner, they returned safely and remained all night with Mrs. Rugal. In the morning they returned home before their father was up ; so he never found out anything about it, and the girls were happy.

Dr. Howard consented to let Wallace return, and remain at home if he would pay one dollar and twenty-five cents a week for his board. The family were all rejoiced to have him return home, as they thought a great deal of their brother ; he was always pleasant company, and they were ready to do him any kindness, and care for him as he could not expect to be when among strangers.

Melons were ripe and nearly gone, but the girls knew of a German family that had a quantity of late ones. So Wallace, and Henry, and Mina and Elgie, with four other couples sallied out one evening to have (as they expected) a melon feast. Mrs. Howard laughed at the girls, and said she hoped they would get what they were going for, but she thought they had better go among the class of people with whom they were in the habit of associating, for they would be more likely to be reated to melons than where they were going. They started, and when they arrived at the door they were met by the eldest daughter of the German. She looked somewhat surprised, but she invited them in and gave them seats. There was

a large pile of melons lying on the table. Wallace turned to the daughter and said:

"This has been a good season for melons?"

"Yes," she replied, but did not make a move toward getting any of them. Mina then said to the old lady, "I am very fond of muskmelon."

"Are you?" she said, but no melon was offered. Henry Rugal now thought that his time for a hint had come, and he said:

"Elgie, which do you prefer, watermelons or muskmelons?" "Muskmelons," she replied, but their efforts to get the melons offered to them were unavailing, and they were all ready to laugh outright. They remained an hour, while the melons stayed on the table, and they left melonless. They then concluded to go home through the woods, as it was nearer, and it was growing cloudy and dark. They entered the woods on the west side, expecting to come out at "Ballqueather swamp," then they would not be far from home. The storm gathered very fast and was soon upon them in all its fury, the rain poured in torrents upon them, and it was only by the flash of the lightning that they could see where to go. They would stumble over logs, and get up and laugh and go on. After wandering around for some time, they finally came out on the road two miles from the "Hall." Their clothing was saturated, and clung so closely to them that they could scarcely walk; but they were a jolly crowd. When they reached the "Hall" Elgie and Mina gave the girls a change of dry clothing, and the young men returned to their homes. Mrs. How-

ard asked the girls how they liked melons. They all looked at each other and smiled, when one of them answered, "Very well, they looked nice." Mrs. Howard at once knew that they had not been invited to taste them, and said she rather thought it was good for them, as they should have known better. Elgie remarked laughingly, "That it was sunshine among clouds, when they left home, but that before they returned home, from the looks of the wet clothing, the sky had been all clouds."

CHAPTER XLVII.

ELGIE HOWARD'S SICKNESS.

Cold winter's icy breath was again blowing at full blast, the sleet that had frozen as it fell had covered the trees till they glistened like diamonds. The tracks of the fox could not be traced as it lifted its feet lightly over the crusted snow. Cold as it was Elgie had to face the storm, for the cows had to be milked and fed. The sheep were bleating and waiting for her to give them shelter and feed, and the geese would run for corn when they heard her voice. Her father would come in at bedtime, and ask if the chores were all done, and thus Elgie's winter work was daily repeated in fair weather or foul.

Dr. Duncan often called at Dr. Howard's. He came one morning just as Elgie had finished milking the cows. He said, "Good morning, Miss

Howard; how would you like to take a sleigh ride this morning?"

"I should like very much to go, Doctor," she replied, "but I have not had my breakfast." He told her to get her shawl, and they would not be gone long. She got on her wraps, and jumped into the cutter, and away they went, to visit one of the doctor's patients. When they returned, he stopped at the "Hall," and took breakfast.

Dr. Duncan had a good influence over Dr. Howard, and often calmed him down when he was "storming." Dr. Duncan was engaged to be married when he came to Onoco, but was wise enough to keep it to himself, for he thought he would be better patronized as a single gentleman. Elgie and the doctor were good friends. He called one day in a jolly frame of mind, and after passing several jokes with Elgie, he said,

"Elgie, why don't you set your cap for me?"

She replied laughing, "When nearly all of the young ladies of the village and surrounding country have worn out their caps, setting them for you, it would be foolishness for insignificant Elgie Howard to try it."

The doctor laughed, and asked her what she was made of.

"I am made of a combination of resulting consequences," she said.

The doctor jokingly replied, "Indeed, I believe it," and went away laughing.

Doctor Duncan had a medical student who had taken quite a fancy to Elgie, but knowing his principles Doctor Duncan warned her against him.

It had been reported that Elgie and the Doctor were going to be married, but she laughed in her sleeve, and let it pass, for she had never thought of marrying Doctor Duncan. She praised and spoke well of him upon all occasions, but only as she would of an esteemed friend.

Spring again began to peep from the shades of winter. The wild vines that climbed the rocks and wrapped themselves around the sturdy oak, or wandered over the clapboards of the lowly cot, were putting forth their leaves. The hawk had begun his soaring aloft in search of prey. Harvest time was fast advancing, and poor Elgie Howard knew her fate. When the time arrived the harvest work began, and Elgie had to travel over the same old ground she had done so many times before. One day while at work pitching sheaves in the mow her arms dropped powerless at her side. Her father, who was watching her, seemed frightened and taking a rope he climbed the the ladder. After fastening the rope around her waist he told Mina to go down. Her father then let her down carefully, and Mina caught her in her arms, and she and her father carried her into the house. Mrs. Howard was heartbroken at seeing her child so nearly worked to death. She had to feed her as she would have done a child, for many days. When she began to recover the use of her arms the typhoid fever set it. Her father was determined to treat her. He prepared some medicine, which Mrs. Howard knew was not properly prepared, so she gave Elgie flour and threw the powders in the stove. She then went to Onoco

and told Dr. Duncan of Elgie's illness, and he told her to go home and keep up good cheer, and he would be there in half an hour. He asked her to say nothing to her husband that she had seen him. In half an hour there was a rap at the door, and Mina opened it, when Dr. Duncan stepped in.

"Good morning, Dr. Howard. Why, who is sick?" he asked.

"Elgie has typhoid fever; but I am going to treat her myself," said Dr. Howard.

"I presume you would have no objection to my making a suggestion," said Dr. Duncan.

"Oh, no," said Dr. Howard.

"Then I would suggest that she be taken up stairs to a more quiet part of the house," said he.

"I don't know how to get her up there," said her father.

"I will take her up for you, doctor," said Dr. Duncan, and picking her up in his arms, he carried her to the room Mrs. Howard had prepared and laid her on the bed. He told her to keep up a good heart, and he would see that she got the proper medicine, though she must not let her father know it. Dr. Duncan then told Elgie's father that he would like to call on her every day, or oftener as he saw fit, just as a friend. Dr. Howard told him he was welcome to call at any time. When he left he told Mina if she came to the village that day she should call at his office and let him know how Elgie was, and whether moving her up stairs had made her any worse. Mina went to the village and called at the doctor's office, where he was waiting. He had prepared

the medicine, and Mina again started home. Mrs. Howard threw out that which her husband had prepared and put the medicine Dr. Duncan sent in its place. That evening about nine o'clock Dr. Duncan again called, and slipped some powders under her pillow. He told Dr. Howard that he did not think her symptoms were any worse, and that he trusted he would bring her through all right. "But," he remarked, "she is a very sick girl."

Eight long weeks Elgie lay and suffered, and Mina was ever watchful of her. When she had recovered sufficiently to sit up the buckwheat was ripe, and Mina and her father were going to haul it into the barn. Elgie had been sitting up but a few days when they began hauling in the buckwheat. He came in and told her to walk out to the barn and keep the hogs away. She said:

"Father, I cannot; I am not able to walk."

He said, "You will go, able or not."

Mrs. Howard then said, "Dr. Howard, Elgie shall not go, even if I die trying to save her;" and as she spoke she stepped between the tyrannical father and her sick child, who had by this time fainted away. Just then she heard a footstep on the portico. Dr. Howard stepped out and Dr. Duncan came in without any ceremony. Mrs. Howard by bathing Elgie's temples restored her to consciousness. "What is the matter?" he asked. Mrs. Howard then told him what had transpired, and Dr. Duncan said he would remove her at once to his mother's house. But Mr. Pollard was going to New York, and Mrs. Howard

thought they had better plan to take Elgie to remain with Mrs. Pollard during the absence of her husband, as then Dr. Howard would not be angry, and Dr. Duncan could assist them at some other time when they were in need. Dr. Duncan left the house and called on his way home to see Mrs. Pollard, who at once sent Elgie an invitation to come and remain with her while her husband was gone from home. Mina said she would take her in her brother's carriage, and so it was settled. The horse and carriage was in readiness at 3 o'clock, and with the assistance of Mina and her mother Elgie was seated ready to start for the house of her kind friend. When they arrived at Mrs. Pollard's Dr. Duncan was there, and assisted her into the house. She had been one week with Mrs. Pollard, and gained so rapidly that the doctor thought that riding on horse-back would be beneficial to her. He had a very fine saddle horse which he rode, and told Elgie he would bring it around for her to ride. He did so, and she rode out every day for three weeks, at the end of which time she was so much improved that she returned to her home. Elgie was ever thankful to the doctor and Mrs. Pollard, and never forgot them in her daily prayers.

Her mother had taught her children in early childhood to offer a prayer morning and evening to their Heavenly Father ; and when all earthly friends had forsaken them they could cling to their Savior, Jesus Christ. Elgie would sometimes say, "I do not know why it is that my prayers are not answered." Her mother would tell her

she must not feel so, for God in his infinite wisdom did all things good and well, and say, "Elgie, your prayers may be answered when least expected. So do not get discouraged."

CHAPTER XLVIII.

MINA AND ELGIE FORBIDDEN TO JOIN THE CHURCH—NORMAN BALLARD'S VISIT.

Elgie and Mina Howard desired to become members of the Presbyterian church in Onoco, where they had attended Sabbath-school and church all their life, as Rev. Mr. Dunbar advised them to do. But when they told their father they were going to join the Presbyterian church, he told them that if they did they would have to leave his house forever. He was willing that they should unite with the Seceder church, but no other denomination should ever claim one of his family as member. The girls told Rev. Dunbar what their father had said, and he expressed a great deal of sympathy for them, but said:

"Under those sad circumstances I do not think God will call you to account."

Elgie remained from school that winter. Mrs. Howard's health was poor; she had been quite sick with an attack of bilious fever, and Mina with Elgie's help did most of the weaving, besides doing the housework and the outside chores, though their brother was kind to them, and helped them as much as possible.

One evening the children told their father tney would like to retire, and were ready for family worship, when he gruffly said: "Retire without worship." Of course they obeyed him. The next night they retired without saying anything about family worship, thinking it would please him. They had just fallen into a sound sleep, when their father came to the foot of the stairs, and called:

"Wallace, Mina, and Elgie, get out of bed and come down to family worship."

They got up, dressed themselves, and filed down stairs laughing. In the course of Dr. Howard's prayer that night, he said:

"O Lord, may my children labor with their hands to obtain things honestly in the sight of all men. Heal all their back-slidings, and keep them from evil, and from all the sins of this world, that they may come into the acceptance of Thy Kingdom."

As they returned to their rooms, Elgie said to Wallace and Mina:

"If God does not answer that prayer, it will be of no use to file down stairs to hear another one."

Mina replied: "I think we can go up on that one," and they all laughed, and again retired.

The next morning their father gave them a lecture, and told them they knew he always wished them to attend family worship. Wallace then said:

"Father, you told us to retire without worship the night before, so we concluded you were going to dispense with it."

Winter was passed at the Hall as usual. There were sleigh-rides, parties, singing-schools, and socials of different kinds, which occupied the time not spent in labor. After Mrs. Howard recovered from her attack of bilious fever, her health began to improve.

That winter Norman Ballard, accompanied by his second wife, came to visit Mrs. Howard. After scanning her surroundings, Mr. Ballard said, "Mrs. Howard, while I did not have a handle to my name, and gave you wine to drink in the street on the Sabbath day, I think you would have done as well to have married a Ballard who has a heart, if not a title to his name. I am a member of the Seceder church now, and while I have been married twice, I have yet the first cross word to speak in my family."

Dr. Howard was sitting where he could hear the conversation of Mr. Ballard and his wife.

Mrs. Howard replied, "If we could see into the future we would do very different in many instances from what we do. God has placed a thick veil between us and the future, and our whole life is an adventure. I hope God in his kindness will permit me to see all of my children settled in life, for then I shall rejoice when my Heavenly Father calls me home."

CHAPTER XLIX.

REV. DUNBAR, WITH A STRANGER, CALLS AT GRUMBLE HALL.

Spring was again at hand with all its music. The ice had disappeared from the pond, and the frogs were holding their annual concert, and Ballqueather swamp rang with the music. The bull-frogs sang "blooda-nouns, blooda-nouns," while the smaller frogs shimed in, "oh, don't, oh, don't." Mina and Elgie one night sat on the porch listening to the doleful sound, Elgie said:

"Mina, would you be surprised if I would get married within the next year?"

"I don't know that I should," she said.

"How do you like my beau, Herbert Raymond?" asked Mina.

"I like him very much, and if you think you would be happy with him, I would advise you to take him and leave this troublesome Hall; you could take mother with you, and I could take care of myself," said Elgie.

"I would give you a home, too, Elgie. When he comes again I expect to have matters between us settled."

"When is he coming?" asked Elgie.

"In two months. He writes to me often, so the time will pass swiftly away," said Mina.

Harvest was again at hand, and the scythe with its keen edge had cut down the tall and the small grasses and wheat.

Elgie and Mina were washing in the kitchen,



when Rev. Dunbar called, and told the girls he had brought a young man with him whom he wished to introduce to them. He said the young gentleman had been with him for several days. He was an Eastern man, and one whom he considered a very fine young man. Elgie told him they were busy washing and could not dress up to see any one. Her hair was curled tightly to her head, and had not been combed. She was dressed in an old gingham dress that was stained with ink or dye. The minister, who was a man of very pleasant disposition, and enjoyed a little sport, said to Elgie, "I dare you to be introduced looking just as you are."

Soon the stranger made his appearance, and Mr. Dunbar introduced him to Mrs. Howard and Mina as Mr. Rolland. Mr. Dunbar then came to the kitchen door and asked Elgie to come in. Mr. Rolland bowed and smiled as Mr. Dunbar introduced her; but Elgie, not to be outdone, seated herself as unconcerned as if she was dressed in her best. Mrs. Howard told Mina to go to the cellar and bring the gentleman some pears. While Mina was gone Mr. Rolland told Elgie that he was from the State of Massachusetts. He said he would like to have a talk with her father, as he was getting up a map of that county, and he would like also to have her father take one. She told him she thought it would be of no use to see him, for he never patronized any person in that kind of business; she told him, however, her father was in the field. Just then Mina came in with the pears. Elgie took her plate, and excus-

ing herself, stepped into the hall and took a seat on the settee. Mr. Rolland said that if Elgie had no objection he would take a seat in the hall, for it was cooler. Mr. Dunbar soon left, and Mr. Rolland and Elgie finished eating their pears, and were conversing together when Mina said:

"Elgie, you will have to finish the washing, as I do not feel very well, and you know that father wants that hay put up this afternoon."

Mr. Rolland said, "Why, you ladies do not have to work in the hayfield, do you?"

Elgie replied that they did.

"I have a notion to stay and help you," said Mr. Rolland.

Elgie jokingly said, "If you do I will give you your supper, a night's lodging, and breakfast."

Mr. Rolland said in return, "If you will comb your hair and dress up, we will call it a bargain."

She said she would do so; and Mr. Rolland went to the field to see her father. When Mr. Rolland returned, Elgie was in the orchard hanging the clothes on the line, singing all the while she was at work. Dr. Howard invited Mr. Rolland into the house, and he took a seat in the hall, where they sat and talked for some time. Mrs. Howard and Mina prepared the supper, while Elgie finished up the washing; she then went up stairs, combed her hair, and soon returned dressed in a lilac-colored dress. As she passed into the diningroom Mr. Rolland whispered, "You have fulfilled your part of the agreement, and I will fulfil mine."

The doctor invited him to supper, and he

thanked him and said he never refused a good offer, and they all seated themselves at the table. Dr. Howard told the girls they must take the field after supper, as he wanted them to rake up the two-acre field of hay into windrows. Elgie said she would do it, as Mina was not able to go, but her father said she could not do it alone. After supper Mr. Rolland placed his map in the corner of the hall, and asked Elgie if she would give him a cup to get a drink at the well. She handed him the cup, and Dr. Howard bid him good-bye, and told Elgie to bring the forks and come into the field. Mr. Rolland picked up the forks and walked by her side. Dr. Howard, somewhat excited, asked:

"What does all this mean?"

Mr. Rolland said, "I have had my supper, doctor, and now I am going to pay for it."

"I do not wish any pay; when I invite a man to eat at my table, he is welcome," said the doctor.

"I don't doubt that," said Mr. Rolland; "but I feel like working this evening."

They soon came to the field, and the doctor said nothing more. While Mr. Rolland and Elgie were at work he gave her a description of the people of his native state, and of the manners and customs of the people. He said the people of his state would be surprised to know of his working in the hayfield with a young lady. Elgie then told him it made her and her sister feel badly to have to work out of doors as they had to do, but they could not help it. She told him they could,

of course, leave home, but they did not dare to leave their mother alone with their father. "I should judge so from the way he is talking to himself," said Mr. Rolland. Her father was very angry with Mr. Rolland for assisting Elgie to windrow the hay. She told Mr. Rolland they tried to be as cheerful as possible, and "sometimes when we are the most cheerful we are the deepest in trouble. There is always a dark cloud hanging over us, although we try to make it appear to the world as though the sun was shining above the cloud." Mr. Rolland replied:

"Well, Miss Howard, not every person has that power."

"I know it, but when a person has been pelted with hailstones from their birth up, they can bear it better than one who has never come in contact with the storms of life until they have arrived at adult age," said Elgie.

"I think you are right," said Mr. Rolland, "but you and your sister are worthy a better fate You both have talents that are being buried. What does your father mean, having children that are gifted, then do nothing towards their cultivation, when he is abundantly able?"

"I cannot answer that. Some persons think that father's mind is off its balance, while others think he is only eccentric, with a determined will to do as he pleases, and to make his family become servants to bow at his will. Father believes in abolishing slavery in the South, at the same time making greater slaves of his own family than those whom he would gladly have free in the

South. He is called one of the most intelligent men in the country. He is a constant reader, and has such a retentive memory he is prepared to talk on almost any subject. He is as well acquainted with the European countries as he is with his own," said Elgie.

"I would think," said Mr. Rolland, "that you and your sister would become settled in life. You certainly have opportunities?"

Elgie replied: "We have had what the world would call good opportunities, but we have so far felt that it might be jumping out of the frying pan into the fire. We have always had gentlemen's company at the Hall, and enjoyed it, but a lover is not a husband. The lover will be very nice until the marriage noose is fastened, then the cloven foot comes into sight, and the mountain of happiness to which the young wife has been looking through blinded eyes, dwindles into a mole hill of misery and woe at her feet. I do not claim that the imperfections and deceptions are all on one side, but the odds are fearfully against them."

"I agree with you, Miss Howard. I think there are many wives mistreated, and whose husbands are alone to blame for all the miseries which his family has to undergo," said Mr. Rolland.

The hay was now about all in windrow, and Mr. Rolland said:

"I enjoyed this haymaking hugely. When I return home I shall tell the people that I had the pleasure of making hay with a young lady who

was far more intelligent than some who grace their father's parlors in the East."

"I thank you for the compliment if you are sincere, and if you are flattering me I doubly thank you," said Elgie, laughingly.

The hay was finished, and as they started for the Hall they could hear her father's voice ringing in the air :"If she marries that stranger she shall never enter my house." Elgie had heard that same song so often that it fell upon her ear with no effect.

Mr. Rolland said he was the only child of his parents, and though they were in comfortable circumstances, they were not wealthy. He asked her if she ever sang; she said yes, she and her sister Mina sang together.

"Then we will have some music if you have no objections," said Mr. Rolland.

Elgie replied she thought that it would be a pleasant pastime. When they came up the path Mrs. Howard was standing on the back porch; the cows had come home of their own accord, and Mina was milking them. Mrs. Howard and Mina asked Mr. Rolland how he enjoyed making hay. He replied:

"I enjoyed it very much indeed."

They went into the parlor, and, shortly after, Dr. Howard arrived and smiled upon Mr. Rolland as if he had the kindest feelings toward him. As soon as the milk was taken care of Mina came in, and they spent the evening in singing, playing games, etc. Dr. Howard played a game of euchre

with Mr. Rolland. When the clock struck 11, Mr. Rolland jumped up and said:

"Doctor, as it is so late, I will ask your hospitality for the night."

Dr. Howard, laughing, said "that he would be obliged to get rid of his girls, so that the gentlemen would not bother him asking for his hospitality. But," said he, "you are indeed welcome to remain."

Mr. Rolland thanked him, and said he would retire.

The next morning, after breakfast, Dr. Howard told Elgie to harness the horses and hitch them to the wagon and drive to the field to haul hay. Mr. Rolland asked what his bill was. Dr. Howard replied:

"I do not charge you anything."

Mr. Rolland then gave Elgie a dollar, which she gave to her mother. He thanked them for their kindness, and told Elgie he would harness the horses for her. When this was done he told Elgie that he would give her money to pay her way to his father's in Massachusetts, and he would give her a letter of introduction; and that he would write his mother that she was coming. Then to show her that he was not deceiving her, he handed her a letter from his father and mother, so that she could see the name of their post office, and his father's and mother's given names. Mr. Rolland continued, "If you will accept this offer, I can assure you a home. I will be absent at least five months. If you get dissatisfied I will give you money to return. If I find, on further

acquaintance, that you are the person that I think you are, and we should be mutually agreed and pleased with each other, at the end of a year I will make you an offer to become my wife."

"I thank you for the interest you have taken in me, and while my home is one of the unhappiest, I could not think of leaving my poor mother. And, although your offer looks very kind, yet you may be laying a plan to lead me astray You are a stranger to me, and if the thought is a wrong one you must pardon me."

"I most certainly do so, Miss Howard, for such a thought has not occurred to my mind. I do not pretend, however, to be a saint, for I fear few men are. I always treat a respectful lady with respect. I admire you for your independence of character. Had you dressed up before you came into the room to be introdueed to me, instead of coming in as you did, in your wash-dress, I would probably have thought no more about you. But I have made you the offer in sincerity, and you decline to accept it?"

"I do," said Elgie.

"Then farewell," he said, and, leaving her at the same moment, he bent his steps towards Onoco.

Elgie drove the team to the field, and helped to haul hay, and build the stack. She thought, "If it were not for my mother, I would flee from this wretched home of mine, yet I might be worse off. I have my character, if nothing else."

When she was at work she thought of her new acquaintance, Mr. Rolland, quite often, and

of the pleasant chat she had with him the evening he helped her windrow the hay. The following day Mina assisted Elgie in the field. While they were busy at work, Elgie saw Harper Pollard drive up to their house, and Elgie whispered to Mina that she would have to return home and help her mother get supper, as she was positive Mr. Pollard would be invited to stay. Presently they saw their mother on the back porch. Elgie said:

"Stop! Listen! Do you not hear mother calling you? Go home, Mina, and I will finish the stack."

This made their father very angry, and he said Mina should leave home that night, and the doctor continued his mutterings and talked to himself incessantly. It was not long till they were called to supper. When they entered the house Mr. Pollard said:

"How are you, Doctor?"

"I am well, but I am a little tired," he said.

"How do you do, Elgie?" continued Mr. Pollard.

"I don't do at all. This thing of being a girl and then having to play boy I don't admire, and more especially when we have an abolition father —one that has such sympathy with the Southern slaves. I think I shall color myself black, call myself Chloe, then he will free me."

Harper laughed and said:

"I don't know, Elgie, but that your plan would be a good one."

Her father said: "Elgie, if you were not quite so saucy you would be more thought of."

"I do not wish you to think more of me than you do now; for the children say I am the favorite now. If you thought any more of me I would have the privilege of running the whole farm—I mean under your directions."

The doctor frowned, then smiled, but made no reply.

"Elgie, you had better come to supper," said Mrs. Howard.

Mina was Mr. Pollard's favorite. He liked Elgie well enough, but he would always favor Mina if possible. Dr. Howard asked Mr. Pollard if he would not go with them to the field and assist Elgie in finishing the stack. He replied:

"Yes, doctor. I intended to go with her after supper."

Elgie told Mina she was to be dismissed from home that night for leaving the hayfield.

"I will dress up, then, so I can make a good appearance in the world," said Mina, laughing.

Mr. Pollard, Elgie and her father went to the field. Mr. Pollard took his place on the stack and assisted Elgie. When her father told her to stop work and unhitch the horses and take them home to feed and water, she was not long in obeying. She leaped upon the back of one horse, and, leading the other, she rode along singing the song of the "Farmer Girl." Just as she came to the road she met Mrs. Worldly and her sister Caroline Hard, on their way to the village.

"Elgie, you are always happy, no matter where

you are. Who is that beau whom we saw in the field helping you?"

"It is Count Sobisky, just from Europe, and yonder comes his brother from Onoco," said Elgie.

Caroline laughed, and said:

"Then your company are of the nobility?"

"I would not entertain any other kind," said Elgie, laughing.

She did not know who the person was that was coming from Onoco. When they came up opposite the barn who should turn in but the gentleman from Onoco, who proved to be Mr. Rolland. Just then Mrs. Worldly and Mrs. Hard drove on, laughing heartily. When they drove to the front of the barn Mr. Rolland told Elgie to go to the house and he would see to putting the horses in the barn.

"I know that you are surprised to see me here to-night, but I felt that I must come. If the doctor gives me the cold shoulder it is not far to Onoco. Who is that gentleman in the field? I think you are fortunate," said Mr. Rolland.

"It is Mr. Pollard, a friend of our family," said Elgie. "He is often here, and is a fine young man. We will have a pleasant evening, for he is a good singer."

Elgie was dressed in the same old gingham dress when she met Mr. Rolland that she had on the day she was introduced to him. Elgie then went to the house and told her mother and Mina of Mr. Rolland's coming. She then washed herself and combed her hair, and put on a buff calico

dress. She had just come down stairs when Mr. Rolland came in and said to the doctor:

"I was so well pleased with my visit yesterday that I thought I would repeat it, taking it for granted that I would be welcome."

"You are quite welcome," said the doctor. They spent the evening in playing whist and singing several pieces of music until the hour for retiring arrived, when Mr. Rolland again asked the doctor's hospitality for the night, which, of course, was granted. The doctor had given up the idea of turning Mina from home that night, and by bedtime he was in good humor. The next morning Mr. Rolland paid his bill, bade them goodbye, and was soon out of sight.

Harper Pollard took Elgie to one side, and told her to be on her guard when in company with Mr. Rolland, for he had ascertained that he was inclined to be a little wild. He said he told her as a friend.

"Thank you," said Elgie, "it is well enough for a young lady to be on her guard always, and especially when in company with these counts, either Count Rolland or Count Pollard."

He laughed and said, "You are a great Elgie. I guess you know enough to look out for number one."

Shortly after the conversation Mr. Pollard left for his home.

CHAPTER L.

THE HARVEST ENDED—MINA'S ENGAGEMENT.

They finished their harvest, and Mina went to spend a few days with a friend. Elgie had taken her father some drinking water, and was returning through the buckwheat field, when she heard a voice saying,

"Elgie, are you coming through the rye?"

"No, sir; I am coming through the buckwheat," said Elgie.

It was Mr. Rolland who had spoken to her. He was standing ready to help her over the fence. It was only two days since he had left the Hall.

"Elgie, you always have that dress on when I come. I wish you would lay it aside," said Mr. Rolland.

Elgie replied, "I should be sure to lose your company if I did, for you said it was the dress that won you. That shows how much dependence can be placed in the word of a man. They will say this to-day and that to-morrow. It is as natural for flattery to fall from their lips, as it is for the little honey bee to gather honey from the clover blossoms."

"I return the compliment," said Mr. Rolland, and they both walked to the house. Mrs. Rugal and Mrs. Miller were at that time visiting Mrs. Howard, and Elgie and Mr. Rolland walked into the hall, and took a seat on the settee.

"If you please, Elgie, call me by my given name," said Mr. Rolland.

"I should be pleased to do so," she said. "What is it?"

"Halburt," he said.

"Halburt Rolland; that is a pretty name," said Elgie.

Mr. Rolland continued:

"I am going away this afternoon in the stage, to another county about seventy miles distant. I would like to exchange rings until we meet again, and correspond with you during my absence."

She replied, "Correspondence is an improvement to any person, espeecially when carried on with one who is capable of writing a good letter; and I doubt not but that you have that capability; therefore I will open a correspondence with you."

Mr. Rolland thanked her, and, drawing his ring from his finger, he exchanged with Elgie, taking hers and placing it upon his finger. Then he bade Mrs. Howard and Elgie good bye and departed.

The grass in the orchard was not quite ripe enough to cut, so Mina's father told her it could stand till she came home after making her visit. She was absent ten days, and when she returned there was a letter awaiting her from Herbert Raymond, informing her that he would be at Grumble Hall on Saturday evening, with many things he had long wished to say to her. On Saturday evening he arrived. That night he told her the story of his love for her, and asked her to become his wife. She consented. He told her he wanted her to keep it a secret from all except her mother and Elgie, and that when they were married they

would give Mrs. Howard and Elgie a home with them. He was going to build a new house for Mina to superintend as Mrs. Raymond.

The clover in the orchard was to be mowed on Saturday, and was to be taken in on Monday. On Monday morning, before Herbert left the Hall, he and Mina and Elgie were standing on the portico. Herbert said, "Keep up a good heart, Mina, this is the last harvesting you will do for Dr. Howard if my life is spared."

He shook hands with Elgie and gave Mina an affectionate farewell. The girls then returned to their work, and Mina was happy in the thought that the time was not far distant when she would be released from her hard work and settled in a home for herself, one to which she could also take her mother and sister.

Wayland Young became tired of a bachelor's life, and married soon after he settled on Wasset creek, and raised quite a large family. Dr. Howard would absent himself from home for days at a time, and his family would not know anything of his whereabouts. After a time, however, they found out that he was usually at Wayland Young's. After Dr. Howard quit the practice of medicine he and Andrew Holland became enemies. Andrew Holland moved several counties from Onoco, and Dr. Howard had not heard from him for twenty years. Ardeela accidentally went into Mr. Holland's neighborhood to sew, and as a matter of course the old friendship was remewed. Mr. Holland extended an invitation to Dr. Howard to bring his wife and come and visit him, and re-

quested him to forget the past. When Ardeela returned home, she delivered the message to her father. He said that he would think about it, and that he might, perhaps, visit them at some future day.

Elgie received a letter from Halburt Rolland the same mail that Mina received one from Herbert Raymond. Dr. Howard watched the post office to ascertain whether Elgie received any letters from Halburt, and he finally told Elgie that if she married Halburt Rolland she should never again enter the house or receive a dollar of his estate. She had not thought of marrying Mr. Rolland. She liked his company, but would not leave her mother to go so far away with a stranger.

She had exchanged several letters with him when he had been absent about two months. Mina had received a number of letters from Herbert Raymond and was seemingly happy. Autumn was again close at hand, and Elgie and Mina had hauled the wood ready for the wintry blasts. The humming-bird, which had been darting here and there among the fall flowers, was now seldom seen; the tall crane was wading in the pond; the leaves of the wild ivy had put on that beautiful tint of red, and the wild birds seemed to be giving their last concert before going to their southern home. Elgie received a letter from Halburt Rolland, saying that he should start for home the last of that week; that he would arrive at Wartell on Saturday morning, and if it was possible he would call on her in the evening, and return the pledge of friendship, at least. She did

not know whether to look for him or not. It was eleven miles to Wartell, and the stage would leave there before the train would arrive. And if he came he would have to come with a team from some of the livery stables of Wartell. Elgie's father asked her if she knew where Mr. Rolland was. She replied:

"No, I would like to see him; he is a very intelligent young man. But I presume we will never see him again."

Just then there was a knock at the door. Mina told Elgie to open it, but she rather answered the summons in fear. When she opened the door, who should meet her eyes but Mr. Rolland. Elgie showed him into the sitting-room, and as he entered he met Dr. Howard.

"Why, is that you Mr. Rolland? I was just speaking of you before you rapped at the door," said the doctor pleasantly.

"How do you do, Mrs. Howard and Mina," said Halburt.

"Quite well, thank you; have a seat, Mr. Rolland. Have you been to supper?" said the doctor.

"Oh, yes, thank you; I took supper at the hotel in Onoco," said Halburt.

"I supposed that you had quit this part of the country, as we have not heard from you since you left here," said the doctor.

"O, no, I have been farther west, on business, and am now on my way home. I stopped off at Wartell on purpose to see Elgie, taking it for granted that I would be welcomed by you, as you

have always treated me hospitably when I have called," replied Mr. Rolland.

"You are welcome," said the doctor.

Elgie had taken the shovel to get some coals of fire to put in the parlor stove, but her father forbade her doing so, saying "that she could sit in the dining room with her company." Elgie said, "I shall entertain my company in the parlor, just as my mother did Dr. Howard, when her parents were opposed to him." This was a home thrust for the doctor, and he could say no more. Elgie kindled her fire and invited Mr. Rolland into the room, closing the door as he went in. Her father then walked to the door and opened it, and returned and laid down on the settee. After a little time Elgie closed the door again, and again her father opened it. Elgie then said she would get even with him, and they sat up till four o'clock, laughing and talking, knowing that her father could be teased in that way. That night Halburt asked Elgie for her likeness to take home with him, and show to his parents. She gave him one, and he put it in his pocket.

After breakfast next morning, Dr. Howard asked Mr. Rolland to take a walk with him, for a look at his farm. Halburt saw at once that it was a game on the part of the doctor to keep him from talking to Elgie. But he accepted the invitation, and while they were taking the walk, Mina and Elgie prepared dinner. After dinner Mr. Rolland said that he must go. Dr. Howard said:

"Mr. Rolland, if you are ever in this part of the country again, and my girls are all married

off, call and see Mrs. Howard and me, and we will entertain you to the best of our ability."

"Thank you, I shall be back by the first of January, Providence permitting, and I shall call at Grumble Hall first place," said Rolland.

He then bade doctor and Mrs. Howard good bye. He stepped to the end of the portico, where Mina and Elgie were standing, and said: "I hope, Mina, when I see you again you will have a home of your own." He then bid Elgie an affectionate adieu, in the presence of her parents, and departed. Mina advised Elgie not to go into the house until her father's temper had cooled down, so Elgie took a walk, and was absent about an hour. When she returned her father said:

"Come here, Elgie." She went with fear and trembling at his command.

He said to her, "If you marry Halburt Rolland, remember that your father will forever disown you, and you shall never see your mother again, or come under the roof of your father's house."

Elgie looked at her father and smiled, and said: "Is that all, father? That's a fine lecture," and she turned and left the room.

CHAPTER LI.

ELGIE AND MINA RESCUE THEIR MOTHER—LEAVING THE HALL AND RETURNING TO IT AGAIN.

Mrs. Howard was suffering from the rheumatism all the time, and she was worn out with

weaving, but it was the only way she had to clothe her children. She worked early and late. She was sitting at her loom weaving one day, while Mina put some pickles in a crock, as the copper kettle which they used for the purpose was in use, and threw two copper cents in with the pickles for the purpose of making them look green. Doctor Howard had been to the village. and became offended at Mr. Bartlet, so he was just ready to give vent to his spite upon his family. He came up the path talking to himself. Just as he entered the kitchen door Mina held up a pickle and said:

"Ma, isn't that a pretty green?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Howard.

Mina's father asked her what she colored them with. She told him that she put two copper cents in the vinegar. Doctor Howard then left the room. Mrs. Howard said, "Mina, take the pennies out for your father is in a bad humor." Mina obeyed her mother. When the doctor returned, he picked up the crock that had pickles in and carried it out to the barn and emptied the pickles into the pigpen.

He then returned to the kitchen, and while Mrs. Howard's back was toward him, he grabbed her suddenly around the neck with both hands, and jerked her around the sitting-room and back into the kitchen until her face was purple. Elgie said: "Mina, we must save our mother's life," and with the words scarcely uttered, they both made a rush for their father, and each took hold of one hand and with main strength drew them from their mother's throat. He then turned on Mina and

Elgie, while Mrs. Howard made her escape through the kitchen door, hallooing, "Murder! Murder!" He knocked Mina down with his fist, and kicked Elgie until she fell. He then ran for his cane. While he was absent hunting it, Mina and Elgie crept out of the house on hands and knees, and then made a rush for the road. With their mother, all trembling with fear, they started for Onoco. Doctor Howard followed them into the road, and then went back into the house and closed the door. Faint and weary, Mrs. Howard and the girls reached Mrs. Cranelin's, the mother too weak to relate the story. She was put to bed by Mrs. Cranelin and Grandmother Sturdly, where she lay seriously ill for three days. Mina and Elgie begged of their mother not to return to their father, for if she did they would be obliged to return with her, and protect her as far as possible from his brutality. In three days Mr. McPherson, Mr. Rich, and Mr. Cottrell called on Doctor Howard. He had not tasted a mouthful of food since the battle at the Hall. He cried and said that he had no power to control his temper, and that his wife ought not to irritate him. He was careful not to tell them that he had been very angry while at the village and came home for the sole purpose of venting his spite on his family, but he did take particular pains to put all the blame on his wife (showing the cowardly spirit of Adam, which still lurks largely in the heart of man). His wife and daughters were innocent of anything which could have caused the brutal onslaught upon his family. On the morning after

the battle at the Hall, when they were all doing nicely, Elgie, who was ever full of fun even at the expense of herself, said: "I guess I will name our battle 'the battle of three rivers.'"

The sky was more than usually obscured by dark clouds. Mrs. Howard said that she had a foreboding that something unpleasant would happen.

After one week had passed, Mrs. Howard was able to go around among her friends in the village. The doctor sent her word that she would be obliged to come back to the hall and weave out her piece of cloth, and get her clothes and those of her daughters; he pledged his word that he would not injure them. By this time he had worked upon the feelings of the people, by his falsehoods and shedding tears, until they concluded that the doctor was not so much to blame for choking his wife, and if he had killed his daughters he would have been insane. At least that would have been his plea to any court who would have undertaken his case. He was a very fine man, after all; he was very honest in his dealings with the world. If Mrs. Howard ever intended leaving her husband she would have done the wiser to have left him years before. They now had their family of children. The world was the jury by which she was judged; he had played the part of judge to the satisfaction of that jury of the world, and they had ruled the decision in his favor, casting at the same time a thought of pity for Mrs. Howard. Mr. McPherson advised Mrs. Howard to return home and talk the matter

over with the doctor. She finally decided to do so, and Elgie watched her mother pass down the road that led to the hall. She dreaded to see her go out of sight, for fear that her father would put her mother to death, as he had forbidden the girls to return with her. Mrs. Howard went in, and the doctor told her that if she would come back and live with him, he would treat her and the girls kindly; and that when they could not agree, he would divide the property equally with her. This was only said to draw her home, for he had no thought of doing any thing of the kind. The girls were then sent for, and returned to the hall that night. Their father said,

"Well, girls, you have come home; it was well that you got out of the house when you did, for if I had got my cane, I would have left you lifeless in the Hall. I am also very glad you saved your mother's life, for I probably would have choked her to death. Look here (baring his arms) see what marks you left with your fingers."

"It was life or death with our mother," said Mina and Elgie, "and we were bound to save her."

"I thank God you did it," said their father. He then told them the terms he had offered their mother. They did not wish her to take up with it, but she did, and they were again to become the slaves of their father.

Mrs. Howard had a friend, J. P. Rivers, who was an attorney and resided at Wartell. She sent Elgie to see him, and ask his advice. Mr. Rivers advised her to remain with him until he made another attack on her person, and that she should

then get a divorce and alimony enough to support her. He told Elgie to present his compliments to her mother, and say for him, that she might as well get a divorce and run the chances of being killed, as to be killed without making any effort to free herself; and that she would always find a friend in J. P. Rivers. That kind message being sent to her, did her much good, and Mrs. Howard felt that she had found a friend in the hour of need.

Elgie received a letter from Halburt Rolland that week. He had reached his home in safety and found his parents well. Elgie said to Mina:

"I think his 'home, sweet home' must be rather a romantic place; I should like to see one. I think we could call ours 'home, sour home,'" and she laughed as she said it.

"Elgie, you will be laughing when you die, if are not careful," said Mina.

"That would be a happy way to leave this world, I'm sure," said Elgie.

She then continued reading a portion of Halburt's letter, as follows:

"I will be at the hall in January, if nothing goes wrong. Tell Mina that I should like to meet Herbert Raymond on my return. Father and mother have taken quite a fancy to your picture, Elgie. I tell them that it is my wife, and that I have worked with her in the hayfield; but they do not believe that, and think I am only joking. Tell your father to be ready to take me over the farm when I come again. Didn't he think that he was sharp? Elgie, I wish that you could be

here to-night. There is to be a nice entertainment, and if you were here you could see what our Eastern people are like."

She then read the letter to herself, and when she had finished it, she said:

"Are you going to the dance at Lovel, Mina?"

"No, I do not care to go," she said.

"Nor I either," said Elgie. "Mr. McMillen said he would take us both, and Wallace wants us to go with him, but we won't dare leave mother."

And so they decided to remain at home. Orlena Drounly had married and settled in the village; so that she did not come to the hall as frequently as she had done before, but her mother was a frequent visitor.

CHAPTER LII.

DR. HOWARD VISITS ANDREW HOLLAND — ELGIE'S LETTERS INTERCEPTED.

Dr. Howard asked his wife to go with him to Lebonville and visit a niece of Mrs. Howard's by the name of Negale. She was the only cousin that Elgie had seen before she went to Pennsylvania to visit her grandmother Howard. He said he thought he would forget the past and go by way of Andrew Holland's. On the following Monday morning they took their departure, leaving Elgie and Mina alone at the Hall to attend to all the chores and stock. That evening Tooker Sterling

and Perry Mills came, not knowing that doctor and Mrs. Howard were gone. The evening was passed pleasantly playing whist.

Elgie did not receive a letter from Halburt for some weeks. She thought that her letters had been intercepted. Ellen Young told her that she was sure they were. Elgie wrote another letter to Halburt, and took it to the post office. The postmaster told her that Halburt was in Wartell. She was sure, then, that her letters were intercepted, but by whom see could not tell. Elgie then took her letter and went to Dr. Duncan and told him about it. He put it in another envelope and addressed it to Mr. Halburt Rolland, Wartell. Elgie received a reply the next day, stating that he had written her eight letters since he had seen her, and that he had received answers to but three of them; he said he would be at the hall on the next Tuesday evening. So she waited his coming. Her father and mother visited at Mr. Holland's and at Mr. Negale's, and returned after an absence of ten days. They had a fine visit, and they said that Mrs. Holland, with their son Ira, would return the visit in about six weeks.

Mina went to spend a few days with Ina Pollard. On the next morning Dr. Howard was taken sick with symptoms of bilious fever; he told Elgie she would have to carry the wood they would want to burn until he recovered. The wood was cut in three lengths and it was a half mile from the house. Elgie then got her brother's horse and wagon, and drove to Ballqueather swamp. She

was busily loading the wood when a Mr. Colton called out:

"What are you doing there, Elgie?"

She replied: "Dr. Howard is making a sacrifice of me. He thinks that if he works me to death it will be equal to Abraham sacrificing his son Isaac. But I don't think that the Lord will come to him, as he did to Abraham, and save his child from being sacrificed on the altar of hard work. Did you know that my father had so much pity for the Southern slaves, that he had none to give his wife and children?"

"If your father were to hear you say that he would chastise you," said Mr. Colton.

"He chastises me and all the rest of us anyhow, so it would make no difference," said Elgie.

Mr. Colton walked on saying, "It is too hard that you have to work so."

Elgie loaded her wood, and picked up the lines, and drove in back of Grumble Hall. Her father heard the wagon, and asked Mrs. Howard what it meant. She told him that Elgie had got her brother's horse and wagon and had hauled a load of wood; he bundled out of bed and was dressed in a minute, and out he went to the back door and said:

"Elgie, load up that wood, and haul it back to Ballqueather swamp, or I will horsewhip you. I told you to carry the wood, and carry it you must. I will be master of my own house."

Elgie stood defiant. She said, "I will die in the yard before I will take the wood back."

Just then Cyrus Young made his appearance,

and Dr. Howard returned to his bed, but had not given up. He said that she should take the wood back. Mina soon arrived, and her mother sent her for Dr. Duncan, Cyrus Young remaining till they should arrive. Elgie took the horse and wagon to her brother's, and when she returned she laid the case before Dr. Duncan and her father. Dr. Duncan reasoned with him, and asked him if he had forgotten how long Elgie had lain sick from overwork. Dr. Duncan finally carried the day, and Elgie went unpunished. That night the girls prayed that their father might be called to his long home; that God would forgive his sins and take him to Heaven. Elgie said, "Mina, do you think it is wrong for us to pray for father's death?"

"No," said Mina, "not if we pray for him to go to Heaven. Self-preservation is the first law of nature, and we do not know what moment he may kill us."

"Let us pray again for him to be taken," said Elgie, "for we never can be christians while he is living. When he made us file down to worship that night I thought I would laugh myself to death, it was so ridiculous. If he is insane he will not be accountable for his actions in the next world, and if he is not insane he deserves a punishment. That is what we would say about any other person, and if it would be right to say it about any one else's father, it would be just as right to say it about our own father."

"I agree with you," said Mina, "but I believe he will outlive us all."

The doctor told his wife that night that she put the children up against him. Elgie overheard him, and down stairs she went, and says, "Father, mother does not put us up against you; she has always told us to respect you; that you are our father. But I can tell you it is hard for us to respect you when you are so unkind to us all. I often wish you were not our father, and if I ever have a husband that treats me the first year of our married life as you treated mother, I will leave him even though I have to beg for a living."

"That will do for a nightdress lecture. You can retire, Elgie," said her father; and she skipped up stairs, but did not go to sleep for a long time.

If the children ever did anything that the doctor considered smart, he would say that that was his bringing up; if they did otherwise, he would say that was some of Mrs. Howard's teaching. Dr. Duncan came to the Hall the next morning to see if the storm was over, and to ascertain whether there had been any damage done the inhabitants. Dr. Howard met him very pleasantly, and he asked Dr. Duncan if he did not think he had brought Elgie through the typhoid fever nicely the summer before. Dr. Duncan replied:

"Oh, yes, doctor, you did well."

Dr. Howard said, "I have not forgotten all my practice yet, though my folks do not like to have me doctor for them; but I am bound to do it."

Dr. Duncan looked at Mrs. Howard and the girls, and smiled, but their father never knew that Elgie did not take his medicine.

CHAPTER LIII.

MR. ROLLAND, MRS. HOLLAND, AND MR. RATHBURN ARRIVE—DR. DUNCAN'S MARRIAGE.

Halburt Rolland arrived at the right time, for Doctor Howard was again in good humor, and seemed very glad to see him. He said:

"Mr. Rolland, you have returned before my girls are married."

"I know I have. I thought that I might influence them to take a sail on the ocean of matrimony," said Mr. Rolland laughing, for he knew the remark would tease the doctor considerably. Mr. Rolland returned Elgie's picture, and remained at the hall five days. He asked Elgie to exchange rings with him for a keepsake. She consented, and he gave her a beautiful ring, taking her plain one in return, and they parted as warm friends. She never loved Halburt Rolland, but enjoyed his society, and was lonely after he left.

The following week Mrs. Holland, accompanied by her son Ira, arrived at the hall. They had left Onoco when Elgie was a baby, consequently they were strangers to them. They had not been there long before Elgie took a very great dislike to Ira, though he seemed to have taken as much of a fancy to her as she had a dislike to him. Mina was trying to assist her sister so that he would not urge his society upon her, and took particular pains to tell him that Elgie had company. After spending some days with them they returned home, inviting the doctor and his family

to return the visit at an early day. Elgie felt greatly relieved to have Ira go, for his room was far more preferable to her than his company.

That week she received a letter from an old bachelor, a friend of the family whom they had not seen for several years; he was an attorney by profession, and quite well off. She never liked him, as she thought that he visited the hall on account of Ardeela and her father. He stated in his letter that perhaps he would make them a visit that week.

Elgie said: "Mina, Edwin Rathburn has written to me that he is coming to make us a visit. What does it mean? Why did he not write to father, Ardeela, or yourself?"

Mina laughed and said:

"I don't know. It would be a good joke if he is coming to see you."

"Yes, I think it would, when he is now old enough to be my father," said Elgie.

Oh, he is not so old as that, Elgie. He is not more than fifteen years your senior," said Mina.

"Well," said Elgie, "when he catches me keeping his company he will catch a weasel asleep."

Mina then said, "I will take his hat when he comes and you must keep your face straight, or I shall have to laugh in the man's face, in spite of my efforts to do otherwise."

"Well," said Elgie, "if you don't take his hat he will have the pleasure of holding it all day."

This ended the conversation for the time being. In a few days after, Edwin Rathburn drove up in his carriage, coming at the time designated in his

letter to Elgie. The doctor received him kindly, and had his horse taken care of. When Elgie saw them coming to the house, she said, "Now, Mina, your time has come to take the hat," and as soon as she heard their footsteps on the portico, she started and left the room. Mina gave Mr. Rathburn a chair, and took his coat and hat. Mrs. Howard then came in and welcomed him to the hall. He very soon asked for Elgie; her mother said she would be in a few moments. Elgie straightened up her face, and made her appearance. She said, "How do you do, Mr. Rathburn?"

"Quite well, I thank you, Miss Elgie; how are you?"

"I am well for me, thank you," she said.

Presently she stepped into the hallway, when Mr. Rathburn excused himself and followed her, and began at once by asking her if she would grant him a private conversation; he continued: "I have been a frequent visitor at this house, and I noticed you when you were a little rosebud; I have waited many years, watching for the rosebud to blossom, that I might pluck it before it met with the many storms to spoil its beauty."

"Thank you," she said, "I very seldom keep gentlemen's company. I would advise you to take Ardeela; she is more of a fall flower, and better suited to you. Please excuse me," she said, and turning, she walked into the sitting-room.

Mr. Rathburn remained until after supper conversing with the doctor. He then said he must return to his home; his horse was brought out,

and he bade them all good bye, saying to Elgie as he left her, that he hoped she would think differently upon reflection, and the carriage wheels were soon heard rolling from the hall.

The next week who should rap at the door but Mr. Rolland. When Elgie opened it, he said:

"How do you do, Elgie? A bad penny will return, but I thought that I must come here once more before I leave this section of the country for good."

"We are surprised, but we are nevertheless glad to see you," said Elgie.

That same evening Harper Pollard called at the hall. When he saw Rolland he laughed and said, "We are doomed to meet here it seems, it seems. I thought that you had left this part of the country."

"I intend leaving very soon, but I thought I would make one more visit to the hall before my departure," said Mr. Rolland.

The sole of Mr. Pollard's boot was the worse for wear, and his stocking showed plainly through it. Dr. Howard called the family to worship, and Mina and Harper kneeled down by the lounge, and Halburt kneeled down on the opposite side of the room with Elgie. While the doctor was praying Halburt spied the hole in Harper's boot, and, crawling to where he could reach his foot, he pulled the small toe through it, and came quietly back to Elgie. They were all convulsed with laughter, but the doctor did not notice them. Presently a spider ran along the carpet, and the doctor picked up a slipper lying close by, and

killed the spider and prayed right along, as if nothing had happened. This was too much for the young folks, and they laughed outright. As soon as worship was over they went into the parlor and laughed heartily, but they did not dare to tell the doctor why they were so amused.

Mr. Pollard returned to his school the next morning, and Halburt Rolland remained four days. He tried to persuade Elgie to make her home with his people, but he did not succeed, for Elgie would not leave her mother. Mr. Rolland saw that his time was flying, and he now bade them good-bye for the last time.

Dr. Duncan called that afternoon to invite Mina and Elgie to attend his infair; he had been married and brought his wife to Onoco. They promised to attend. The reception was very pleasant, and Mr. Duncan told Elgie they would be friends, just as they were before his marriage, and that he would always be a friend to the family.

In about three weeks after the infair of Dr. Duncan Mr. Rathburn again visited the hall, in company with another gentleman, a Mr. Willis. She treated them kindly, and as a joke gave Mr. Rathburn a lump of salt in place of loaf sugar; he thanked her and said he would accept it as it came from her hand. But when he found it was salt he said, "Elgie, when you want sheep to follow you, you generally give them salt," and he followed her closely wherever she went. She replied: "And when you want to catch a sheep you throw the salt in a pile;" and with that she threw the salt into the center of the room, and

they all joined in a hearty laugh. After supper Mr. Rathburn called for his horse and left with the thought banished from his mind, that he should ever be able to catch the sheep he was after.

Elgie was full of fun. She thought no harm of any one, and thought no one could think any harm of her innocent sport. She said there were so many clouds hanging over her home that there ought to be some sunshine occasionally. Her mother told her she should always be careful, even in joking with a person, lest she should hurt their feelings. Mrs. Howard felt that perhaps Elgie had hurt the feelings of Mr. Rathburn.

Dr. Howard returned from the village that evening, and handed Elgie a letter. She opened it. It was from Ira Holland, asking the privilege of calling on her again, and requesting her to correspond with him. He spoke of his pleasant visit with them, and of their journey home. Elgie said that she would not answer it, but Mina advised her to send him a reply. She then sat down and wrote:

"I received your favor. Glad to know you arrived home safe. I do not wish to open a correspondence, and hope therefore, that you will not trouble to write me again.

Remember me kindly to your mother.

Respectfully, ELGIE HOWARD."

Mina said, "I think he will write you again, for I saw he had his mind set on you."

"I hope not," said Elgie.

CHAPTER LIV.

MRS. HOWARD'S FORTUNE—DEATH OF MINA HOWARD.

Mrs. Howard received another letter, and on breaking the seal, she found it read as follows:

"MY DEAR SISTER JULIA:

"I write to inform you of mother's death. She died as she lived, part Quaker and part Deist, in her religious belief. Our sister Ada's daughters took care of her in her last illness. After her death, I went to her bed to secure you the $600 that mother had for you. She always kept it in the bed, and when she was taken sick, she told me it was there. But when I went to get it, it was gone. I asked the girls about it, but they claim to know nothing about it, though I am sure it is in their possession. I have done the best I could for you. I packed you a trunk full of clothing, consisting of the following articles: Three silk dresses, one black, one drab, and the other brown; a silk shawl, and two large blanket shawls; six suits of underclothing, one bed quilt, and your mother's Quaker bonnet.

"I sent them to the city of P—— by Esquire Daily. He will express them from there to Wartell. Let me know when you receive them. Sister, I am going to be married to a young lady of twenty-two years of age. Mother is gone now, and I am alone in the world, and this is why I marry. I know there is too much difference in ages, but she is a fine girl. The rest of the friends are well.

From your brother,
ROLLIE COLLENS."

Mrs. Howard then received a note from Wartell stating that there was a trunk in the express office

for her, with charges on it to the amount of one dollar and fifty cents. Wallace having some business to attend to at Wartell, said he would bring the trunk home.

When Mrs. Howard opened it, she found that all it contained was a cashmere skirt, three pairs of woolen hose, and a silk Quaker bonnet. The trunk had been robbed. Mrs. Howard cried, and her husband laughed at her, and said that was a big fortune for Judge Collens' daughter to receive. The doctor always seemed to rejoice at Mrs. Howard's misfortune. She had intended giving each of her daughters a silk dress, but now they were "minus."

Mrs. Cottrell had not been to see them that week, so Mrs. Howard told Elgie to call and see if she was sick. When she entered the house, she found Mrs. Cottrell sitting by the window crying. She said,

"Elgie, I do not know why I feel so despondent, but I have a foreboding that I shall never go to the hall again, and I feel that I am soon to die."

Elgie burst out crying, for she thought as much of Mrs. Cottrell as she did of her own mother. She had been a true and kind friend to them always. Mrs. Cottrell's words came true, as she lived but a short time afterwards. Orlena took care of her during her sickness. Everything in the neighborhood was changing. Helen Rugal gave up single life, and became Mrs. Harrison, and moved west, leaving Henry with his mother. They were now more social at the hall, than ever before, for they

were lonely. They would often speak of the happy hours, that Helen, Mina, Elgie, Wallace, and Henry had spent in fishing in Wasset creek, in sleigh rides, spelling schools, dances, and many other amusements, that were gone forever, and recalled to the mind as a delightful dream.

One day after a heavy snow had fallen, there was a rap at the door, and Mina opened it, and Ira Pollard stood upon the door-step. She said, "How do you do? Come in, Ira. I am so glad you have come. It has seemed lonely to-day. We have been having so much company of late, and to-day so far we have been alone. Jim Clifford and Edward just left yesterday."

"Did they? I wish that I had met them. I returned from college yesterday, and thought that I would visit the Howard mansion to-day," said Ira.

"That was right," said Mina.

Elgie was busy handing in a web for her mother, and after a little they came in and were glad to see Ira. Ardeela was at home, and had been busy sewing up stairs. She came in saying: "I am glad to see you, Ira, and am glad you came. I want you to wash Mina's face with snow, for we cannot do it, and it would be a capital joke on her."

Mina said: "Ira, try it; that would just suit me to-day, and be excellent exercise for a student," and with those words from Mina they both started out into the snow. Elgie told her she would be likely to take cold, but she replied,

"There is no danger, I am not delicate as you are."

Mary and Ardeela advised and urged Ira not to give up till he had washed her face. But Mrs. Howard came out and stopped them. The next morning Mina complained of the headache, but said:

"Don't tell mother, Elgie. I took a little cold, but will be over it in a few days."

Wallace and Ardeela concluded to visit Pennsylvania. They were going in a private carriage, and Mina helped them to get ready, though her head was still aching. Elgie was attending school a part of the winter, and told Mina not to do the washing that week, and she would do it on Saturday, as school would close on Friday. She did the washing, however, and when Elgie came from school she found Mina lying on the bed, suffering with the headache. Elgie said:

"Why did you not listen to me, Mina? I could have done the washing on Saturday as well as not."

After a little Mina got up and went to work as usual, but she seemed sad to what she had been before. She received letters from Herbert Raymond, but it made no difference in her actions.

Spring had again come, radiant with all its beauty. The grass was peeping up in the meadows. The orchards were in full bud, ready to blossom; the frog had again peeped out from under its icy coverlet, and said, "I come, I come." The little lamb skipped in the sunshine; the wild and the tame flowers were striving to climb up

through the soil, to be admired by all mankind, and the sky was blue, but what a cloud was gathering in the distance and casting its blackening shadows upon the hall.

Elgie said, "Mother, have Doctor Duncen come and see Mina. Perhaps if he should bleed her it would take the pain from her head."

"I have tried to persuade her, but she says it is all foolishness, and that she will be well in a few days," said her mother.

Mabel Cranelin called that day to see her. Mina was lying down, and requested Elgie to go to the village when Mabel returned, and bring her a lead pencil. Elgie did as she was requested. Mrs. Howard then asked Mina if she did not feel able to sit up. She replied, "No, But where is Elgie? I want her to comb my hair."

Her mother said, "You sent her for a lead pencil. I will comb your hair for you."

"No, you won't. Elgie always combs my hair for me, and now I will do it myself." She got up, went to the mirror and combed her hair nicely. Then laying the combs away, she turned and giving a laugh like that of a maniac, she fell to the floor. Mrs. Howard ran for the doctor, who was in the back part of the house, and picking her up he laid her on the bed. Elgie arrived with the pencil, and just as she reached the portico Mrs. Howard met her and told her to run for Dr. Duncan. "Your sister is going to die. She is a raving maniac." With this word she started upon a run, her feet scarcely touching the ground. She reached the doctor's office and told him her errand,

when both started back with all possible speed. The doctor reached Mina's bedside and opened a vein in her arm, but it was too late. She had brain fever, with but few chances for life. Elgie called and told Orlena and her mother of Mina's illness, and then turned her footsteps homeward. Elgie was so tired that she could scarcely get home. Dr. Duncan had a sister who resided with him, and upon hearing of Mina's illness she followed on to Dr. Howard's and did all she could to help Mrs. Howard in relieving the poor girl. All they could do seemed to be of little use. Within two hours the hall was full of anxious friends; for Mina Howard was a favorite with most of the people in the neighborhood. Night and day she raved. She would call for Herbert and ask if he had not come. Elgie had sent him two letters, but he had not received them. Dr. Duncan asked who it was that she was calling.

Elgie told him it was the young man to whom she was engaged to be married. He said:

"Then, Elgie, it is your duty to go to him; have you written to him?"

"I wrote him two letters, but the post-office is in rather an out-of-the-way place, and probably he has not received them," said Elgie.

"I would advise you to get some gentleman to accompany you," said Dr. Duncan, "and go for Herbert Raymond."

Elgie was almost wild with trouble and grief. She told her mother of Dr. Duncan's advice, and she told her she had better go. Elgie got Mr. Burlison to go with her. The roads were very

muddy, and it was growing dark. It was ten o'clock at night when they arrived at Mr. Raymond's. Elgie told him of Mina's sickness and probable death, also her constantly calling for him and asking if he was not coming. Elgie said she would be rational for a few moments, and would say, "Has he been here, Elgie? Oh, I wish he would come."

"Will you go, Herbert?" asked Elgie.

"Of course I will go and see Mina. I did not get the letters, or I should have been there before this," said Herbert. Without delay he set out for Dr. Howard's, but Elgie remained till next morning. When she and Mr. Burlison reached home they found Herbert there, looking sad, and Mina did not seem any better. Elgie asked him if he wished to attend the funeral if Mina died; he said "Yes," and then requested her to send him word if anything happened after he left. He remained until afternoon; he then kissed Mina good-bye, burst into tears, and left the room, and shortly after started for home. When Mina became rational again she said, "Herbert was here; I knew he would come. Did he feel sorry, Elgie?"

"He did," said Elgie.

"Poor Herbert," said Mina, and she never spoke of him again.

Mrs. Howard's youngest sister, the one that Judge Collens had disinherited, though she was wealthy now, arrived from the west. She said she would cut her visit short on account of Mina's illness, and continue her journey to Pennsylvania.



and inform Wallace and Ardeela of Mina's illness. It was a sad parting between the two sisters who had not met for thirty-five years.

Mrs. Howard's sister reached Pennsylvania in two days, and found Wallace and Ardeela there. She told them of Mina's being so very sick, and they at once set out for home, reaching there two days before Mina died. She asked each one to pray for her, and then said:

"The door is open. What time is it, mother?"

"Three o'clock," said her mother. These were the last words spoken by her. At eleven o'clock the following morning she breathed her last. The noble and true-hearted Mina Howard had passed into eternity. Her life's dream was short, mingled with many hours of sorrow and a few of happiness. Her face had been washed in snow once too often on earth; but we hope that Christ had washed her with the snow of righteousness, and fitted her for the Kingdom of Heaven.

Dr. Howard sawed the board, and brought it in preparatory to laying poor Mina out on it, after which he left the house. Her death being so sudden, created a great excitement, and the people were congregating in and around the house to assist, if needed, and to mingle their tears of sympathy with the bereaved family. Elgie stepped to the back door, and as she looked north of the hall, saw her father digging Mina's grave on a knoll in the field. She acquainted her mother with the fact, and she entreated some of the gentlemen to go and prevent his digging the grave, but none of them had courage enough. They

were all afraid of him. Wallace Howard then said he would go. He approached his father and said:

"Father, is your heart harder than adamant, that you can dig your own child's grave?"

His father threw down the shovel, and said: "I will follow her remains nowhere else. You and your mother and sisters will rue this."

In the meantime Dr. Duncan had sent Harvey Huff to inform Herbert Raymond of Mina's death, and of the day of her funeral, not knowing that the Huff family were enemies of the Howards. When Harvey came back he said that Herbert would not come. Wallace had Mina's grave dug in the graveyard at Onoco. On the day of Mina's funeral Dr. Howard requested that the family be left alone with the corpse in the room. As soon as the strangers retired, he stooped down and kissed the lips of his dead daughter, and thanked God that he had not been the cause of her death; he then said to the family:

"You are going to bury her in the graveyard. Very well," he said, and shaking his fist in Mrs. Howard's and Elgie's faces, he continued, "you are to blame for all this, and you shall rue it."

With that he threw open the parlor door, and bade the pall-bearers, "Come on." He crowded the fourth pall-bearer back, and taking hold of one of the handles on the coffin, assisted in con veying her remains to the hearse. He followed the hearse to the road, and then stepped back and waited until the large concourse of people who had come to follow the remains of Mina Howard to

their last resting-place, had left the yard. After all had passed out he closed the gate and returned to the house. Mrs. Howard was so weak and worn out that she was not able to attend the funeral, so remained at home with friends who were going to remain with her. Wallace, Ardeela, and Elgie were the only members of the family who, as mourners, followed Mina's remains to the grave. The rain poured down, and when the coffin which held all that was mortal of Mina Howard was lowered into the grave, it was lowered into a watery one, but this they could not remedy. They now repaired to the church, where the funeral services being conducted by the Rev. Dunbar, they sang very beautifully the songs, "Where She is Sleeping," "I Would not Live Always," and "I Ask not to Stay." Rev. Dunbar tried to console them in his discourse, in their sad affliction, but they felt as though they could not find solace and consolation in his words. They wended their way back to the hall, which was now more desolate than ever.

Now, to add to their trouble, Harvey Huff's sister had reported that Herbert Raymond had never been engaged to Mina Howard and Ardeela scolded Elgie for sending for Herbert. Elgie knew all about the engagement, so she got Wallace to go with her to see him, and after telling him the story that was being circulated by the Huff family, he said, "It is a black falsehood; Mina and I were engaged, and if she could only have been spared to live, I should have made her my wife. I did not attend the funeral, because

Harvey Hunt told me that Dr. Howard was going to bury her in the field. I could not stand it to see her buried in that way, so I thought I would stay away, and afterward have her body taken up and interred in the graveyard, even if I had to have it done in the night time. You did right in sending for me, and I am glad I went as soon as I did. I am selling off the timber that I had got to build Mina a house, now that she is gone forever I shall have no use for it. We can make no calculations in this life; God soon disposes of them. I was thinking in the near future of taking Mina from her wretched father, and we would have been so happy together. But I believe she is in heaven, and I, as well as you and your mother, must give her up to the call of God," and Herbert burst into tears.

The following poetry was written by her sister Elgie:

Mina, thou art laid 'neath the thornapple tree;
Its branches may wave forever o'er thee.
The wild birds may sing their sweet songs o'er thy grave,
While naught but its branches above thee doth wave

Storms may arise, but disturb not thy rest,
And the rain drops may fall on thy cold lifeless breast;
But naught can awake thee from thy blessed sleep,
Though your brother and sisters around you do weep.

Before thou didst leave this cold earthly sod,
Thy finger was lifted to heaven and said "There's my God.
What time is it, mother?" then the clock told three,
"The door is open, they are waiting for me."

"Now father and mother, and friends I loved well,
And sisters and brother, I bid farewell.
Our Heavenly Father a mansion on high
Has prepared for all who in Jesus do die."

Wallace gave an account of his trip to Pennsylvania with Ardeela. He said that his uncle Lewis Howard's wife had left him because he abused her so. She took the three children and went to her father's. Mrs. Howard replied, "That is just what I expected. I saw what a temper he had when he was but fifteen years old, and I told him then that if he did not govern it, it would govern him before he was forty-five; my words have come true. I am glad Vina had sense enough to leave him, and did not do as I have done—remain and see her children, to say nothing of herself, abused and treated like the slaves or the heathen of India. I think, Wallace, that persons of such tempers ought not to marry, for the disposition may be transmitted from one generation to another."

The doctor in the meantime had been an attentive listener to the conversation between Mrs. Howard and her son. He then said:

"Well, I think it would have been better if all of my father's family had remained single, for we were all high tempered, with the exception of sister Adeline, and we would all be master, even if we thought we would have to die for it."

"Yes," said Mrs. Howard, "and how nice you all can appear in company; you can then govern your tempers without any trouble."

The doctor left the room and made no reply to his wife's last remark.

Some time after Mina's death, Wallace told Elgie that he was engaged to marry his cousin, Vina Shelton; he said that he knew it was wrong, but she was his choice. Elgie told her mother of

his engagement. Mrs. Howard told him that she thought the example of his uncles should be an everlasting warning to him, never to think of marrying a cousin, and she did her utmost to persuade her son to look well to the very important step of his life.

That summer Elgie's health was poor. Her cousin, James Shelton, came in July to visit them. Dr. Howard became angry at Elgie, and told her that in the morning she could leave home, and he never wanted her to enter his house again. So by sunrise next morning she was up and had her clothes packed and took a part of them to Mr. Highland, a neighbor. As she went up the path to the house she asked Mr. Highland if he could give a poor homeless wanderer some breakfast. She could not help laughing as she said it, and he thought she was joking; he said:

"Has the doctor turned you out?"

"He has," she said.

"Well, come in, Elgie, and have your breakfast, or a dozen of them if you wish," said Mr. Highland, "and take your clothing up stairs."

Elgie did as he told her to do, and then came down stairs to breakfast. After breakfast she returned home to get the rest of her clothing. Seating herself in front of the bureau, she drew out one of the drawers. Dr. Howard raised his head in bed and asked;

"What are you doing, Elgie?"

"I am leaving home as you commanded me last night. I am taking some of my clothing to Mr. Highland's."

"Go straight and get your clothing, and try not to be so saucy to your father. I could not live without you. The sunshine would all be gone out of the house if you should leave," said her father.

Elgie replied: "I was not saucy. I merely said that I would not work on the farm as I had done, and I won't. I will leave home first; and I would prefer to leave if it were not for dear mother."

She saw her mother crying, for she thought Elgie would leave. She went up, and, putting her arms around her neck, said:

"For your sake, mother, I will remain and try it again."

She then went to Mr. Highland's and got her clothes. Mr. Highland asked her if her father had repented again. She replied, with a smile:

"Yes, this is about the ninety-ninth repentance. He is like Pharaoh of old; he hardens his heart, but will not let me go."

Mr. Highland said, "Elgie, you are doing right. Stay with your poor mother."

She then picked up her bundle and returned to Grumble hall.

CHAPTER LV.

IRA HOLLAND'S LETTER—ELGIE HOWARD VISITS THE KEYSTONE STATE.

That night Elgie received another letter from Ira Holland, asking permission to visit her. These lines were enclosed with the letter:

"Tell me, Elgie, tell me truly
How I have loved one, so false, fickle and fair.
O, give me but the courage of despair.
Pardon me the bitter thought,
That ought but love my ruin sought.
Those powdered locks and foppish art
Have stolen the idol of my heart.
Will you not yet be mine, Elgie?"

Elgie answered the letter and told him that she should never marry him, and that she hoped he would never attempt to write her again. Ardeela was going to remain home that summer, and Dr. Duncan advised Elgie to go from home for a month or two and see if it did not improve her health. Trouble and sickness had completely broken her down. He knew how badly Ardeela hated Elgie, so he thought if she went away on a visit it would be an advantage to both Ardeela and Elgie, if Elgie would consent to absent herself until Ardeela should get ready to go out sewing, as was her custom. Her cousin, James Shelton, who was visiting with them, insisted that Elgie should return home with him. Her father and mother consented to let her go, and it was so arranged. Elgie and James were taken to Wartell in a carriage by Wallace; he saw them safely on the cars, and bidding them good-bye watched

the iron horse out of sight. This was the first time Elgie had ever been on the cars. They reached the river about six o'clock, and James took her to stay over night to an old acquaintance of his, by the name of Vance. James introduced her as Miss Howard. Mr. Vance stepped forward and kissed her; and he said: "I kiss you for your grandfather's sake, for I know that you are Judge Collens' grandaughter. You are his very image, and I loved him as a father. Am I mistaken?"

"You are not," said Elgie, "and I am proud of the compliment. I wish that I was as noble as he was. But it is strange you should see the resemblance so quickly."

The next morning they crossed the river a little below the place where Elgie and Mina had crossed it a few years before, when Elgie jumped into the river. How happy they were at that time, going to see their grandmother! Now, Mina was at rest. Dr. Duncan told Elgie to drive all trouble from her mind as far as she could, and not think of her dead sister and grieve for her, but to let the sunshine of her visit fill her thoughts, for when she returned she would find trouble enough. When they reached James' home his partner in business, Mr. Derlin, was the first to welcome them, and they entered the house, where she met her cousin and aunt. Mr. Derlin spent the evening at the Shelton's, and was very pleasant. He was at that time waiting on one of Elgie's cousins, but after a short time began playing the agreeable to Elgie. He bought, for her especial benefit, a fine horse, saddle, and bridle,

and presented her with them. She rode the horse on a visit to some friends and when she returned she gave the horse back to Mr. Derlin, though he did not wish her to do so. Elgie's uncle, Lewis, took her to visit a family by the name of Crawford. Mr. Crawford was a cousin of Mr. Pollard's, living near Elgie's own home. William Crawford told her uncle, Lewis Howard, to leave Miss Howard and he would bring her home. William Crawford had also been waiting a little time on another one of Elgie's cousins, and as he seemed to like her company better than her cousin's, it made "trouble in the camp" immediately. Mr. Crawford invited Elgie to go to a place called the Camel's Back, so they went one afternoon. They roamed around exploring the sights, which were all new to her. They saw where the robbers made their home in early days, gathered sarvis berries, and whiled away a happy and romantic afternoon. The next day William took her to her uncle's. Elgie's cousins, when they saw how much attention Mr. Crawford was paying her, became very jealous of her, and her uncle was anxious for his daughters to get homes of their own, so he wrote for Mrs. Howard to send for her daughter, as they did not keep a boarding-house for relatives. When her cousin, Arthur Shelton, found this out he told her to remain and he would pay her board. But she was too proud spirited to remain, and left for home the week she got her mother's letter. Elgie said:

"The dark cloud hangs over me, no matter what I do. I have watched my every step since

I left home; prayed daily to be kept in the right path; but jealousy has stepped in and marred my visit. I do wish I had remained at home."

She and her cousin James had now reached the river; the water was swiftly gliding by, the waves were rolling, and once in a while a small white-cap could be seen. Then a steamer came in sight loaded with passengers. James waved his handkerchief, and the Forest City turned its wheel for the shore. James begged Elgie to become his wife, but she said, "No, we are cousins," and bidding him good-bye she stepped lightly on the boat, and in an hour was landed safe at the depot, where she took the train for Wartell. "What happiness is there in this world?" thought she, as the train glided along, "I find none, go where I will!" Wallace met her at the depot at Wartell; she told him of her visit and of her cousins' jealousy. He said:

"Mother has worried about you ever since she received your letter. I knew that they would be jealous of you, and told her that she would find on your return that that was the trouble."

They reached the hall at seven in the evening. She was welcomed home by all but Ardeela, who gave her a lecture as long as the moral law. She said that it was just what she expected, and that she had no business to leave home so soon after Mina's death. Elgie then said:

"Ardeela, cut your lecture short, for you won't get any pay for it, and you are foolish to lecture for nothing."

Ardeela went to assist in taking care of Mrs.

Cottrell, so Elgie was left in peace. How lonely she felt! Wherever she went she missed her sister Mina. People would say, "How attached Wallace and Elgie Howard are; I never saw a brother more devoted to a sister than he." Mrs. Cottrell died in three months from the time Mina Howard was carried to her last resting-place, and interred in the same graveyard. After her death Orlena moved West. Dr. Howard did his own farming that summer by exchanging work with the neighbors. The citizens often spoke of Dr. Howard's actions on the day of Mina's death, and the day of her burial, and most of them came to the conclusion that he was not insane, but that he was most assuredly a very eccentric man.

CHAPTER LVI.

WALLACE BUYS THE FARM—ARRIVAL OF EDWARD CLIFFORD.

Dr. Howard kept his cattle in pasture in the field that was farthest from the house, half a mile away; he compelled Elgie to milk in the field and carry the milk home, instead of bringing the cows up to the yard. One evening she went to milk about five o'clock. Just as she had finished, a heavy hail-storm came up, and before she could get to a place of shelter the hail fell so fast and pelted her so hard that she cried. Mrs. Howard was sick, and begged the doctor to go and meet

her, as she was not able to go herself; but he would not. He was engaged reading, and said it would toughen her; he did not believe in having girls as tender as house-plants. When Elgie reached home she set down the milk-pail, and said to her father:

"Self preservation is the first law of nature. I have milked the last cow for you that I will milk in the meadow. If you will bring them to the barn I will milk them. I am no colored slave, nor do I intend to be treated like one, especially when I have an abolition father."

"Elgie Howard has spoken it, and she means it. I am going to sell the farm to Wallace, if he will buy it on the terms I offer it to him," said Dr. Howard.

When Wallace came in his father said:

"I want you to buy the farm, Wallace. You pay me twenty-two hundred dollars cash, and I will allow you twelve hundred dollars for keeping your mother her life-time. You can pay twelve hundred dollars down, and the balance in yearly payments of two hundred dollars each, with seven per cent. interest, and I will pay my board as a stranger."

Mrs. Howard urged] Wallace to accept the offer; for she thought that they would then be from under the tyrant's will and rule. So Wallace accepted, and the article was drawn. Wallace said Ardeela and Elgie should have a home with him until they married. Elgie now thought she would educate herself for a school-teacher.

They were visiting at Mr. Clifford's one beauti-

ful evening. The moon shone in all its brilliancy, while the stars never seemed more lovely. Edward Clifford, who was conversing with Elgie, asked her what she intended doing, now that Wallace had bought the farm. She replied:

"If mother keeps her health and Ardeela remains at home I expect to go to school and prepare to teach."

"I think that would be a very good idea," said Edward. "I understand your father has made no provision for you."

"He has not. I have now to take care of myself as best I can," she said.

"I am sorry," said Edward, "If I was not engaged would offer you a home with me. I always thought you cared more for Harrington than you did for me."

"I enjoyed his company, and liked him as a teacher, that was all," she replied.

"Are you willing that I should visit you as a friend, when you have no other company?"

"I have no objections, but perhaps the young lady to whom you are engaged may have," said Elgie.

"Well, if she gets offended I am willing, so long as you are single. You might have had a better education than you have if you had listened to me. You remember that I told you to choose any young lady you would like for company, and Clarence Beaufort and I would pay your board for keeping house for us, when we were attending school at Dartmouth. Then you both could have attended school," said Edward.

She replied, "You know that people would have talked if I had gone, and you know, too, that my father would not have permitted me to go, though it was very, very kind of you to make the offer."

"Elgie, I am glad that you are going to school, for you know there is nothing like an education. If it will be agreeable to you, I will be at the hall next Saturday eve," said Edward.

"It will be agreeable if you see fit to come," replied Elgie.

They returned to the Clifford mansion, and at 10 o'clock they left for the hall.

On the appointed evening Edward came. He spoke of the happy times he had had with her and Mina, taking them to dances; he then told Elgie he was free, having adopted that plan to ascertain whether she cared for him or not. She told him that Clarence Beaufort, Dr. Duncan's student, had asked her to wait upon her, and that the doctor had warned her against him. "You know him well, for he was your room-mate at Dartmouth," said Elgie.

"I do not like him, and I do not wish you to go with him. You have the privilege of going with any young gentleman of good standing, in my absence, as I would not wish to deprive you of the pleasure of society, and if you accept me in my offer, I am to have the same privileges in having the society of ladies that you have in the society of gentlemen. I feel that you will be true to me, and I will be the same to you. I know that you have but little pleasure in this world at

best, and I would be the last one to mar your pleasure for one moment," said Edward.

Elgie thanked him for his interest, and the subject was dropped, perhaps to be continued.

CHAPTER LVII.

ELGIE STRIVES TO BECOME EDUCATED—MARY STANFIELD.

Wallace told Elgie to keep an account of the weeks she worked for him, and when he had the farm paid for he would pay her for that time, at the same rate of wages that other girls got when they worked by the week; he said it would not be right for her to put in her time for him for nothing, and that his mother could not do the work alone for all his hired men. While she attended school in the district, he would expect her to work for her board. She agreed to this.

That fall Wallace concluded to go West on a speculation; he asked Elgie if she would attend to part of the stock, if he would get his father to attend to the remainder. She said she would, so Wallace left for the West. Mrs. Howard had a quantity of weaving on hand to do, for she continued to weave in order to clothe herself and Elgie, as the doctor would not give one dollar towards her clothing, and she was also anxious to help her son in paying for his farm. Wallace started on his Western trip early in the fall. The fields of late clover

were red with blossoms; the beautiful dahlia stood up in proud defiance, bathing itself in the sun's bright rays; the tall princess feather waved in the breeze; the sky darkened a moment, as the wild pigeons were flocking from the west in droves, and millions of them were settling on the bushes in Ballqueather swamp, making the day and night hideous with their incessant chirping. Ballqueather swamp made a fine hunting ground, and the citizens of Onoco and the surrounding country all came there for game.

One week after Wallace left for the West, his mother was taken sick with inflammatory rheumatism, and Elgie had now all the weaving to do, her mother to take care of, and all the household duties to attend to. Dr. Duncan told her that if she did not get a girl, he would for her,—as the amount of work she had to do was entirely too much, and she would break herself down. She then sent for Ellen Young, and paid her for her help with the money she earned weaving. In this way she succeeded in doing the work without further trouble.

Sabbath afternoon Edward Clifford called. The doctor received him kindly, and asked:

"Edward, is it an act of necessity for you to visit Elgie on the Sabbath day?"

Edward replied: "I do not know that it is, doctor, but I am sure that it is an act of mercy."

The doctor laughed at the reply and said no more. When Elgie excused herself to go and do the milking, Edward accompanied her and said he would help her. This remark seemed to enrage

the doctor very much, and he sent Ellen Young to tell Elgie that she should come in herself, or have Edward do so. But she paid no attention to his commands, for she knew that he had no power over her now, as he did not own the farm. When she returned to the house her father told her that for disobeying him she would have to feed the stock until Wallace would return. Elgie smiled, and said:

"Father, I thank you for your kindness, and feel grateful to you. I have always considered you a large hearted man, and have no doubt but that you will enter the kingdom above without a pass."

Edward Clifford stayed all night, and sat up with Elgie to watch and care for her mother, and next morning he returned to his school. Mrs. Howard gradually recovered from her illness, but Wallace did not return for ten weeks, and with her mother in such poor health Elgie did not care to leave her alone.

The small-pox broke out in that neighborhood during the winter, and all were afraid of the disease. Elgie felt as if it was her duty to go as a nurse at night. People would say to her, "Are you not afraid that you will get the disease and die? I would not go for anything."

She would laughingly reply: "Good people are scarce. You had better stay away. If I die, I will die at the post of duty."

She went wherever she was needed, but finally she succumbed to the disease, though fortunately

it took the milder form of varioloid, and she recovered.

Mary Stanfield was an orphan girl, whose character had always been above reproach, until she became acquainted with the man to whom she became engaged, and under the pretence of marriage he wrought the poor girl's ruin. Of course a great many people censured and forsook her, while most of those who had known the upright life which she had lived previous to meeting this Satan in the form of man, blamed him for the misfortune and ruin he had brought upon the poor orphan girl. Elgie would not forsake her, but treated her as she always had done, and after a little time sympathy ruled out prejudice, and she was again taken up by those who had discarded her. One of the young ladies said to Elgie one day:

"Why do you stand up for Mary Stanfield in the way you do? I would not."

Elgie replied: "The Scriptures say, 'Let him that is without sin cast the first stone,' and I consider it my duty to be a friend to Mary. She is a poor orphan girl, alone in the world, and has been deceived and led astray."

The young lady said she did not know but Elgie was right, and the next week she called to see Mary Stanfield. Mary lived but a few years after this, dying with quick consumption. When Elgie called to see her, she said, with a feeble voice:

"Elgie, you have been the means of saving my soul. Had you forsaken me in the dark hours of

my life, I would have given up, feeling that I had not a friend in the world. I know you will get your reward in heaven."

After she was dead Elgie assisted in preparing the lifeless body for the tomb, and followed her to the tomb. Her schoolmate, her associate, had gone, but she gave evidence before she left this earthly habitation that she would have that crown of glory which others who have never fallen may never see.

Ardeela had come home for a rest, and Mrs. Howard had so far recovered her health that Elgie thought she would commence her education. She went to Sewellen to find a place to work for her board while she attended school. Doctor Easton said they would be glad to have her live with them and attend the academy, and so it was arranged. The school was to open in two weeks, and Elgie was happy. Edward Clifford's school had closed, and he was at the Hall on the appointed evening as usual, and was much pleased to learn that Elgie had found a place to board. He said he would make his next call on her at the residence of Doctor Easton, as she would be likely to start to school on the next Monday.

Monday morning came, and Elgie left the Hall in good spirits, telling her mother if she needed her at any time, or was taken sick, to send for her, and she would come home at once. When she reached Dr. Easton's, he told her he had seen the professor, and he told him that if Miss Howard attended the sdhool, the scholars would all leave, because they were afraid she would in-

troduce the smallpox into their midst. The professor sent her word to stay at home at Dr. Easton's, and come to his house to recite in the evening, for three weeks; then by that time she would be admitted into the school. Mrs. Easton agreed to take Elgie, if she would do the work nights and mornings, take care of the baby one night in the week, and do the washing, for her board. There were five in the family including Elgie. She had just finished her morning work, and changed her dress for school, when Edward Clifford called; he said:

"Elgie, I have come to ask your advice as to whether I shall study medicine or law. If I study medicine I shall go with Dr. Easton; if I study law, I shall go to law-school at Albany."

She replied: "I will not advise you, Edward. Do as you think best, and then if you do not succeed, you will not have me to blame."

He considered the matter a few days, and decided to study law. Before leaving to enter law-school, he called to bid her good-bye, and he told her that he would write her as soon as he reached his destination.

Elgie began her studies, and recited to the professor in the evening for three weeks, at the end of which time he told her that he had notified the school that she would be in attendance on the next Monday morning, even though every other scholar should leave. During the three weeks that Elgie had been at Dr. Easton's, she had all the work to do with the exception of getting dinner. She started to school Monday morning, and

was kindly received by the scholars. She studied in the evening, as she had no time through the day. As soon as Edward Clifford reached Albany he wrote to Elgie as he had promised to do, and was a very good correspondent.

Elgie overheard Mrs. Easton tell her husband one morning that Elgie did more work than the girl they had to whom they paid one dollar and a quarter per week. Dr. Easton said that it was a shame, and that his wife was not fulfilling her part of the contract with Elgie; but she replied: "I am going to take all the work out of her I can get." She knew she would not leave her as she was so anxious to get an education. Mrs. Easton was a peculiar woman, and very economical. She thought she would cut down on her table expenses, so told the doctor and Elgie they ate too much, and cooked as little as possible. The consequence was, that at the end of three months Elgie began to break down. Too much work with too little to eat and hard study were too severe for one of her constitution to endure, and she plainly saw that she would have to leave school. The dark cloud was again hovering about her head, and when she went to bed that night she cried herself to sleep. The next morning she went to school, but was not able to study. In the evening she received a letter from Edward Clifford, congratulating her, as she had written how nicely she was progressing with her studies. Now she would have to write him that she would be obliged to leave school unless she got better. After reading Edward's letter she called on her

teacher and told him she would have to leave school, giving him her reasons. He said:

"I am very sorry, Elgie. I noticed that you were not looking well, but who would have thought that Mrs. Dr. Easton was such a woman? How little we know the people of this world. Those who wear the pleasantest faces often have the hardest hearts."

"Mr. Barney, what is my indebtedness to you for the two month's instructions that you have given me?" asked Elgie.

He replied: "I will make you a present of it, and if you had remained and attended the whole term I should have done the same."

"Thank you a thousand times. I did not expect it, and I am willing to pay you," she said.

"I have heard what a hard lot you have had, Elgie, and if there is no one to step in and help you, or do you a kindness, I fear you will grow faint by the wayside. If it were possible for us to do so we would board you until the end of this term," said Mr. Barney.

To this she said: "You are so noble and kind that you make me feel that there is one star at least shining through the clouds."

CHAPTER LVIII.

ELGIE HOWARD LEAVES SCHOOL.—DR. BEAUFORT.

Elgie returned and told Mrs. Easton that she was going to leave the next morning. Mrs. Eas-

ton was surprised, and urged her to remain, and said she did not know how she would get along without her. Elgie replied, "You should have thought of that before. I heard your husband warn you, but you heeded not. What do you attend church for? Does the minister tell you that imposing on an orphan girl, or one who might as well be, constitutes true religion? You know, Mrs. Easton, that I am dependent on my own exertions for a living. I have a father in name, but he is no father to me. Your children may be left without parents, and how would you feel if you knew that they would be treated just as you have treated me. Remember it will come home—God will not forget it."

Mrs. Easton looked at her in surprise. She put on her bonnet, brought out her trunk, and stepped out of the door. Dr. Easton met her just as she was going through the gate. She told the doctor she was going to leave, and told him the reasons why. He said, "I do not blame you, Elgie, but am very sorry to have you leave. If you wait until I visit my patients I will take you home."

"Thank you, doctor," she said, "I am going home with a friend who is in the village on business."

The doctor then said, "Did Mrs. Easton give you the present that I told her to give?"

"She did not; she said she was going to keep it for Fanny, when she was grown to be a young lady," said Elgie.

The doctor said no more about the present,

and Elgie started up street. Presently she returned with her friend, and after taking out the trunk, Mrs. Easton came out and bade her good bye, asking her to come and see them when she came back to the village. Elgie thanked her and seating herself in the carriage they drove off. In a short time they reached the hall. When Elgie stepped on the portico, Ardeela met her and said:

"What has brought you home? I knew that you would not stay. I suppose that you came home to drive me away."

Elgie replied, "I never drove you away from home nor do I wish to do so now. I have come home because I am sick. Mrs. Easton put all the work on me, and I could not stand it."

That night Elgie had a high fever. In the morning Dr. Duncan was called in and pronounced it fever, induced by over-exertion. She was confined to her bed for two weeks, and when she was able to be about again, she studied at home and assisted her mother with the work.

One evening Dr. Beaufort called, and asked Elgie for her company for that evening. She told him she did not keep gentlemen's private company. Dr. Beaufort replied, "No, I suppose not, only when Edward is about; I suppose, then, that I may as well go." He picked up his hat and she went with him to the door; he said, "Elgie, you will be sorry for this—good night!"

That week Ellen Young called on Elgie, and told her that Dr. Beaufort had told her that Edward Clifford and Elgie Howard would never be married if he could prevent it, and he thought that he

could. Whenever Dr. Beaufort could hurt Elgie's feelings he would do so. A gentleman called at the hall on business one day, and said that he wished some young lady would come and make her home with them, for company for his wife, as he was away from home so much of the time. He then asked, "Would you not like the opportunity, Miss Howard? You could attend the academy so nicely, and we are going to have a new teacher, Professor Rosslin."

Mrs. Howard asked the gentleman's name. He replied, "Downing." Mrs. Howard said, "I have heard of you, Mr. Downing, and I am willing to have Elgie go, if she wishes to do so. You can inform your wife of the offer you have made us, and if she is pleased with it let her drop Elgie a note to that effect."

That week Elgie received a note from Mrs. Downing, saying she would be happy to have her come. She studied hard at home until the time arrived for her to go to Dr. Downing's, and as she left the hall she said: "Mother, I will venture to say that something will happen to prevent me from going to school the full term, for you know that I am like you; the cloud is ever before me."

She found Mr. and Mrs. Downing very kind people; was much pleased with the boarding-house, and entered the school room full of hope. Her teacher was very kind, as were the scholars. When she had attended school two months she was awakened one morning by a terrible pain in her head. After she ate her breakfast she felt better, and started to attend school. About

twenty minutes after she had started, Mrs. Downing went to the door and found Elgie lying on the ground in an unconscious condition. She ran to the office for her husband, and coming as quickly as possible, he picked her up and carried her into the house. Mrs. Downing then went for Dr. Easton, who, when he arrived, opened a vein in her arm, restoring her to consciousness. When she revived, Dr. Easton said:

"Well, I declare, if this isn't Elgie Howard. I am sorry to find you so ill. Mr. and Mrs. Downing say you must remain with them, and I will attend you until you have finally recovered."

She was sick three weeks, during which time she received the kindest attention. When she recovered, Dr. Easton told her she had better quit school, for a time, at least. She replied:

"Just as I expected," and burst into tears. "There is nothing for me in this world. Try as hard as I may, everything goes contrary. Professor Rosslin told me the day before I was taken sick, that if I remained the full term he would guarantee me a certificate to teach."

Dr. Easton said, "I am sorry for you, but you must rest your brain for six months at least."

She then called on her teacher, and told him what Dr. Easton said, and asked how much her bill was for the time she had attended school. Her teacher replied, "Miss Howard, I am very sorry that you are compelled to leave. I will make you a present of your bill." The tears rolled down Elgie's cheeks, as she thanked him. She then bid him goodby, and went to Dr. Easton

He told her that Mr. Downing had been there to pay her bill for his medical services rendered her, but he had no bill against her, as she had paid it when she worked for his wife and attended school. He said, "Whenever I can do you a favor in the future, I am willing to do so."

"Many thanks," she said, and bidding goodby to the doctor, she departed, and returned to her boarding house to ascertain how much their bill was for taking care of her when she was sick. Not one cent would they take. Elgie said that she could not find words to express her gratitude, more than to say that she was thankful. She said, "Mr. and Mrs. Downing, you cast your bread upon the waters, and may you receive it after many days."

Mr. Downing brought a carriage to take Elgie to the Hall. She told him that she was thankful that she had been so fortunate in finding friends in the hour of her adversity. As they drove up to the Hall, Mrs. Howard came out to enquire what was the matter. Mr. Downing informed her of Elgie's sickness.

"Poor, unfortunate child! It seems as if she never would be able to accomplish what she has so much desired," said Mrs. Howard.

Elgie then replied, "I have not given it up, mother, only for the time being. I shall teach school yet if I live. There will be school in our district this winter, and I shall attend there."

Mr. Downing then bade Elgie and her mother goodby, and asked Elgie to come and see them when she could, which she promised to do.

She wrote Edward Clifford that she was again obliged to leave school on account of ill health, but that she expected to be able to attend the district school that winter, Providence permitting. When she again heard from Edward, he expressed a great deal of sympathy for her, and said he was very sorry she had again been obliged to leave school, for he thought there was nothing like an education, and nothing which he more admired in a young lady. She answered his letter, and told him she herself thought a good education a find thing for any one to possess, but without common sense to accompany it, it was of little account.

A married man was engaged to teach the school and Elgie began the first day. She was always jolly, and tried to keep up good spirits. Mr. Hardsell, the teacher, was a man of fine education, but had a will something like that of Dr. Howard. He told the scholars that he would open a singing school, and asked Elgie what night it would be most convenient for her to attend. She named Thursday evening, and that suiting best all around, he appointed Thursday'evening for singing school, and, turning to Elgie, he said, jokingly:

"I presume, Miss Howard, you expect to have a beau on that evening."

"No, sir;" she replied, "I do not expect a beau this winter."

"All right," he replied, "then I will go home with you myself."

"I do not think you will," she said.

"I'll bet five dollars that I will go home with you," he replied.

As she thought he was only joking, she said no more.

One evening after singing school he called her to him and said:

"Miss Howard, can I have the pleasure of seeing you home this evening?"

"No, I thank you, Mr. Hardsell; I do not think it would be the proper thing to do, as you are a married man."

He looked at her a moment and then said:

"But I told you I would go home with you, and I will."

She started to leave the church, when he caught her by the arm, and said:

"You may as well go peaceably, for I will see you to the hall to-night, if it costs a thousand dollars."

So she accepted his company and walked peaceably along, though she knew just what would be said about it, and when she arrived at home she began to cry, and went to her room feeling very badly. A few days after this it was reported that she sought the company of the teacher, who was a married man. The report soon reached the ears of Mr. Hardsell's wife, who of course felt annoyed. Elgie then determined to call upon her and explain the whole matter, which she did, to the satisfaction of Mrs. Hardsell, who said:

"That is just like my husband. When he undertakes to do anything, he will do it, no matter what may be the consequences, and," she continued, "sensible people will not blame you, Miss Howard."

Elgie was very sensitive, and it was a long time before she felt right about it. She told Mrs. Hardsell that if it were not for her anxiety to teach, she would leave the school. As spring was again approaching, the school term soon closed.

CHAPTER LIX.

ELGIE TEACHING SCHOOL—ATTENDING CAMP-MEETING.

Spring had again rolled round, and the birds were returning from the south to their summer quarters, and nature, in all its beauty, reigned supreme. Elgie's father gave her no encouragement, but she decided one day to make the venture to engage a school. She ascertained the day upon which the examinations would be held, and started out to the examination in the face of many discouragements, yet with a slight hope ahead. She received a certificate for a short term, but it covered all the time she was engaged to teach. She knew she was deserving of a certificate covering a longer period of time, as she had been so informed by one of the board of examiners. However, she had succeeded beyond her expectations, and was happy, for she knew a short term certificate was the forerunner of a longer one for the next time should she be able to continue teaching. That week she received a letter from Edward stating that the college examination was

to be held the following week and asking her to pray for him that he might be successful. He said if all went well he would spend the Saturday following at the hall. Elgie entered the school-room as a teacher on the next Monday after receiving her certificate. She felt happy, for she had at last conquered.

At the end of the first week she returned home well satisfied with her week's experience. She received another letter from Edward, stating that he had come off conqueror; had received his diploma, and would be at the hall at 6 o'clock that evening. He arrived as promised, and Elgie was indeed very glad to see him. They spent a very happy evening, and Edward left for home, arranging to return to the hall two weeks from that evening. Elgie went back to her school on Monday morning, and her sky looked bright and cheerful. She thought: "Can it be that the dark cloud has passed away, and that Elgie Howard is to see happier days? How I have deceived the world! I was cheerful in society, but oh, what a sad heart was within! If my mother could only be happy I would be content," and she felt that she could say to her: "Hope on, mother, Elgie will yet give you a home if God does not claim you first."

Elgie learned that Ira Holland had moved west. He had visited the Hall in company with his sisters, and still urged his suit, and swore that he would never marry any other girl. She now laughed, and said that her lover was gone. At the

end of a week she returned home full of bright prospects.

Edward Clifford was passing through the village, when he met Dr. Beaufort, whom he had not seen since his return from college. Dr. Beaufort and he then engaged in close conversation for an hour, when Edward turned his horse and went toward home. Ardeela, who was in the village at the time, told Elgie upon her return what she had seen. Elgie at once recalled the remark of Dr. Beaufort the evening he had called upon her and left in anger—"'Miss Howard, you will be sorry for this." And she also remembered what Ellen Young had told her. She felt sad, but she said: "If Edward Clifford is that easily influenced I am better off without him. This world is full of nothing but sorrow. If there is no place of happiness beyond the grave there is nothing worth living for. The Bible says, 'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."' She concluded with the thought that the Lord loved her if affliction was a sign, and that she was an heir to the kingdom of Heaven. She prayed that night that the Lord would throw his protecting arm around her wherever her lot might be cast, and enable her to do right. She thought if there was anything in store for her it must surely be hidden behind the cloud. Elgie bid her mother good-bye and returned to her school.

During the next day she received an invitation to come from school in the evening and remain over night with Justice Godard's family. She was very thankful, for she thought the young peo-

ple would cheer her up. Evening came, and after closing school she took the hand of one of her little scholars and walked leisurely along, thinking of the uncertainties of life. She thought: "Why is everything made so beautiful on earth to attract us here below, and then in the midst of the attractions we are cut down like the flower of the field that withers and droops in the rays of the sun? But we are forbidden to ask why; it is God's work, and we must submit." She had now reached Mr. Godard's gate, and went to the house. Mattie Godard met her at the door, laughing, for she was a jolly girl. Mrs. Godard and her two sons soon welcomed her, Mr. Godard being absent at Wartell. After supper they went out into the front yard and sat down under a large tree, where they were all laughing and talking, when a carriage containing a gentleman drove up, and inquired where he would find the young lady who was teaching school in that district. William Godard replied, "This is the lady." He then gave William a note, which he handed to Elgie. She opened the envelope, and all it contained was:

"MISS HOWARD: You may consider me your friend, but nothing more. EDWARD CLIFFORD."

She said nothing, but closed the note and made a strong effort to conceal the emotions that struggled in her heart. Several times during the evening Mattie Godard said:

"Miss Howard, while you are jolly and apparently happy, there is a shadow flitting over

your face at times, as if you were feeling downhearted."

She returned to her school in the morning, and when she closed her school in the evening went to her boarding place. On Friday evening William Godard was going to Onoco on business, so he took Elgie home. She always spent her Sundays with her mother when possible for her to do so.

On Saturday Mr. Burt Highland called and invited Elgie to go to campmeeting with him in the evening. She accepted the invitation and in the evening started for the campmeeting. The first person she met was Herbert Raymond, who brought a friend with him and introduced him as Doctor Bomont. They spent a very pleasant time together, and when they came to get ready for home Doctor Bomont asked Elgie if he could have the pleasure of her company home. She replied:

"No, thank you, you will have to excuse me, as of course I will return with the gentleman, Mr. Highland, who brought me here."

Then he asked her if he might come for her on Sabbath evening, to which she again replied:

"If I come at all I will be obliged to come with my brother, as my father does not allow me to attend campmeeting on the Sabbath day; but I thank you kindly for your invitation."

"Then if you come with your brother can I have the pleasure of your company on the campground?" asked Dr. Bomont.

"Certainly," said Elgie; and tipping his hat he bowed himself gracefully away.

On Sabbath morning Wallace asked Elgie if she would not like to attend church at Sewellen. She said she would like very much to go. Their father asked Elgie where they were going, and Elgie replied: "Wallace has asked me to go with him to church at Sewellen."

"What time will you return?" he asked.

"Not until evening," she replied.

They were soon on their way to the camp-ground, and when they drove into the edge of the woods there stood Doctor Bomont ready to receive them. She introduced her brother, and Doctor Bomont offered her his arm, and they strolled through the camp. They met Ellen Young at the camp-ground, and presently she whispered to Elgie that Edward Clifford was on the grounds. Pretty soon Wallace came and brought the same news. Elgie was looking at the crowd of people, when she discovered Edward coming toward her. In a moment he took hold of her arm, and she introduced him to Doctor Bomont. Edward said:

"Dr. Bomont, will you please excuse Miss Howard for a short time?"

"Certainly. I should judge from appearances that you have the best right to her company," said Dr. Bomont.

Edward then offered her his arm, and bowing to Dr. Bomont, they walked away. He asked Elgie to take a seat in the carriage, as he wanted to have a talk with her, and had wished so much to see her but was ashamed to call at the hall after

writing that note. He said he thought perhaps she would be at the camp-ground, and he would have an opportunity to explain matters. He then told her that on the evening he was to have been at the hall Dr. Beaufort called him into his office, and told him that during his absence she had associated intimately with a young man of not very good repute. He said it made him angry, and he did not stop to consider whether it was true or false, but wrote upon the impulse of the moment. After he had sent it, and become calm again, he remembered that Dr. Beaufort wanted to wait upon her himself, and he then concluded that it was all spite work, which conclusion was confirmed on inquiry. He asked Elgie to overlook this and forgive him. She said that she would forgive him; but if there was any trouble in the future it would be forever. He then asked her for the privilege of taking her home that evening, but she declined, and said she would return with her brother. He then told her that he would be at the hall the Saturday night following.

Edward Clifford came at the hour appointed. Nothing was said of the past, but they talked of the prospects for the future. After spending a pleasant evening he left, saying he would not call again for four weeks, and probably not that soon, as he was to be admitted to the bar in four weeks, and he would then look for a location. But he said he would write her and let her know when he would come.

CHAPTER LX.

ELGIE CANVASSES AND ATTENDS DANCING SCHOOL.

A lady who was canvassing for dress diagrams called at the hall and desired to make her home with the Howards for one week, and she wanted Elgie to take some of the diagrams, telling her she could make money with them, and that she would give her territory to canvass, and trust her for pay. With the approbation of her mother, who had been consulted in the matter, Elgie accepted the offer. The lady requested her to go to Auburn to canvass; so her brother Wallace took her to Auburn in the carriage As they were passing a school-house at noon, they saw the teacher playing ball with the scholars. He recognized them, and climbing over the fence he said:

"How do you do? Where are you going?"

Wallace told him of their business. It was Edward Clifford who had spoken to them. He continued, "You stop and take dinner at my boarding house, and to-night I will find Elgie a place to board in Auburn." He told Elgie he was as much surprised to see her there as she was to see him, and that the reason for his being there was that the teacher had been dismissed from the school, and the directors had offered him good wages to teach the school three months; he had accepted the offer and had intended writing her the next Sabbath. After the horse was fed, Wallace returned home. Edward told Elgie not to let

it be known in Auburn that they were engaged to be married, for he was getting his Saturday nights lodging free at Mr. Gillmor's and was taking Emma to dancing school; but now he was glad she had come, for he could take her to dancing school with Emma. There was a young lady from Auburn visiting school that afternoon, and the especial attention of Mr. Clifford to Elgie attracted her notice so much that she asked Elgie if she and Mr. Clifford were not engaged to be married. Elgie replied, "You will be obliged to ask Mr. Clifford that question, if you get an answer," as she was determined not to tell a falsehood.

That evening Mr. Clifford took her to Auburn and found her a nice boarding place, and sent her trunk to her. When he left her he told her he would call on Tuesday evening and take her to the dancing school. The young lady who had visited the school in the afternoon with Elgie told Emma Gillmor that Elgie had said that she and Mr. Clifford were engaged to be married, and that he had invited her to come to Auburn and attend dancing school. On the evening appointed Edward called and accompanied Elgie to the dancing room. He then returned and brought Miss Gillmor. He took Emma past Elgie on to the dancing floor, and with this Mr. Purdy stepped up and asked Elgie to dance with him that set. She took his arm and he led her on the floor opposite Edward and Emma. Edward looked angry, but Elgie acted as if nothing was wrong. When they had finished that set, Edward asked her to dance with him. She replied:

"I am engaged for the next dance, after which I shall be most happy to dance with you."

After dancing the next set with a stranger, she danced with Edward. He asked, "Why did you let out the secret of our engagement? That is why Miss Gillmor did not want an introduction to you. She is angry with me as well as with you."

She related to Edward what the lady had asked her, and the reply she had made. There was nothing more said, and the evening passed pleasantly. The dancing master was introduced to Elgie, and danced with her several times. He asked her who had been her dancing master, and she replied, "Nature." He then said:

"Miss Howard, I will compliment you as the best dancer in the room.

"Thank you," she said and laughed. At the close of the exercises Edward first accompanied Miss Gillmor to her home, and then returned for Elgie. When they reached her boarding place she said:

"Edward Clifford, I think you and I had better part here. If you do not wish to acknowledge that we are engaged, and are making Miss Gillmor believe that you are going to marry her, and all this for the sake of a few dollars, I say it is unprincipled and if you intend to deceive me, it is the same. If you prefer Miss Gillmor or any other girl to me, I am sure I do not want you for a husband, for I could not be happy with you. I shall inform Miss Gillmor to-morrow that we are engaged."

"Elgie," said Edward, "I do not wish to give you up."

"Then I shall tell Emma Gillmor so," said she, and he consented to have her do so. The next morning she called on Emma Gillmor, and told her the true story, and that the lady had told her a falsehood.

"Miss Howard, are you and Mr. Clifford engaged?" asked Emma.

"We are," said Elgie, "but I did not acknowledge it to the young lady."

This settled the affair completely, and the Gillmors were very kind to Elgie while she remained in Auburn, and she did well canvassing. One evening she asked Edward if he was going sleighriding on Thursday evening with the rest of the young folks of Auburn.

"Do you want to go?" he asked.

"I do," she said.

"Well, then, go," said he.

She made no answer to this, and that night she staid with Emma Gillmor. Mr. Barker called and asked Elgie to go to the dance with him. She accepted, and as Emma had an invitation from Mr. Dix they were well provided for. They had been gone but a short time when Edward Clifford drove up to Mrs. Gillmor's with a horse and cutter, intending to take Elgie, but was informed by Emma's mother that the girls had gone. He then returned to his boarding-house in rather an unpleasant state of mind to brood over his disappointment.

Mrs. Biddler, a lady with whom Elgie became acquainted, told her that if she would come and board with them she would take a diagram, and

that would save her paying out her earnings in board. Elgie was glad of the offer and accepted. The next evening of the dancing school Elgie waited for Edward to come for her, until it was quite late. Mrs. Biddler said:

"Elgie, I do not think Mr. Clifford is coming for you. Anyhow, you had better give him up to-night and go with Frank, my son."

She replied, "If I do not go with Edward I will not go at all. I will remain at home."

Just as they were talking, they heard footsteps coming up the walk, and Edward came in. "I am a little late," he said.

She soon donned her shawl and bonnet, and as Mrs. Biddler opened the door they passed out. They had scarcely reached the gate when Edward said, "I had a notion not to come for you, Elgie; that is why I am late. What business had you to go with Mr. Barker to the party? I went for you and Emma, and you were both gone."

"Mr. Clifford, you told me to go if I wanted to, and I went. If you wished to take me why did you not say so, and not answer me as you did?" said Elgie.

By this time they had reached the dancing hall, and the conversation closed. When Elgie came from the cloak room Edward seated her and then left to go for Miss Gillmor. While he was absent Mr. Worthington, the dancing master, came up and entered into pleasant conversation with her and said, "Miss Howard, from all reports and appearances I should judge you and Mr. Clifford were engaged." Elgie replied, "You will have

to enjoy your own opinion in that matter." "I only have based my opinion on the attention he gives you, but I conclude you are one who can blind your feelings to the world, but at the same time you feel deeply," said Mr. Worthington.

"You are right, Mr. Worthington, I do feel deeply, and am of a very sensitive disposition; but I love honor above all things, and despise anything dishonorable," she said.

When Edward returned with Emma Mr. Worthington said: "Mr. Clifford, I am enjoying my right of discovery. I discovered Miss Howard alone, but now that you have returned I will transfer the right to you, retaining only a claim to dance with Miss Howard this evening."

The dance commenced with a Spanish waltz. They whirled gracefully around the hall, and when they had finished Edward led Elgie to her seat and asked Miss Gillmor to dance with him in a quadrille. She stepped lightly on the floor, and all were soon keeping step to music. While they were dancing Mr. Worthington, seeing Miss Howard again left alone, walked across the floor and, seating himself beside her, said, "You and Mr. Clifford made a splendid appearance on the floor this evening."

"Thank you for the compliment, Mr. Worthington. If you are flattering us, I shall feel more than complimented," she said laughingly.

"Miss Howard, I deny the charge of flattery. Will you honor me with your hand in a schottische after this quadrille," said Mr. Worthington.

"I will," said Elgie. The quadrille was

finished, and he led her upon the floor. She said, "Mr. Worthington, this is the last time I shall attend the dances here. I leave Auburn to-morrow. I have enjoyed the school hugely, and I shall miss these special evenings very much, I assure you."

"Why do you leave so soon? I am sorry," said he.

"My business in this place is finished, so that I can remain no longer. My stay was but temporary," she replied.

"What about Mr. Clifford?" he asked.

"He will remain until the close of his school," said Elgie.

They went through the dance nicely, and she again took her seat. Edward then seated himself beside her and said: "I think that Mr. Worthington is showing quite a preference to you this evening."

"He just paid you and I a compliment, by saying he thought us the best looking couple in the waltz. Don't you think you will grow fleshy on that?" said Elgie archly.

Edward smiled, and said, "It was quite a compliment if he meant it."

"It will answer us the same purpose anyhow. I think that most all compliments are flatteries, for there are but few persons who have candor enough to compliment a person to his face, although there are some who will do so, and mean just what they say," said she.

After this conversation she spent the rest of the evening dancing with different gentlemen, and

when the company dispersed, Mr. Worthington entertained Elgie, while Edward escorted Emma home, and returned for her. They then left the hall, never to return again, for that night had developed traits in the character of Mr. Clifford that she could not have believed he possessed. His conversation and style were as different as if he had been metamorphosed into another being. As they walked along, she thought, "Can it be that I have been so deceived, after being in his society for three years or more? How true it is, that a man is seldom found out by a lady, unless she marries him. I am single. I shall study this matter carefully over."

They reached her boarding house, and she bade him good bye, for she intended to leave on the next day.

Before retiring she took a seat by the window, and looked up at the sky. It was cloudy, and not a star to be seen. She was all alone, in a strange place. The words of Mrs. Biddler came to her mind: "Elgie, Mr. Clifford is not worthy of you, you are blinded." She could not sleep. She thought: "How strange, and yet how thankful I am, that I have been successful in my business. I can now liquidate my debt, and I can have the satisfaction of being honest. Father can not abuse me, for I have made this trip a successful one." She offered up a prayer, and she closed her eyes with the thought that it was perhaps all for her good, though it was a hard path to walk in. She could look at the hopes that were blasted, and the future perhaps a blank, for she felt that

there were none in whom she could place confidence. In the morning she answered the call to breakfast, after which she packed her trunk and waited for the hack, which Mr. Clifford had ordered. Mrs. Biddler wanted her to remain another day, but Elgie did not wish to do so. She then said:

"Elgie Howard, I warn you once more against Edward Clifford; take my advice."

Before she had time to enter the house, her father came out and asked her if she had been successful in her business. Her mother was glad to see her, for she had been anxious about her. Elgie told her parents of her success, and of the pleasant time she had had at the dancing school. She sent ten dollars to the lady who had trusted her for the diagrams, and she then had enough left to divide with her mother and provide clothing for both of them. Ardeela had gone West some two months previous, to make a visit among her mother's relatives.

Elgie now assisted her mother with the housework. One morning she was engaged in sweeping off the portico, when Dr. Beaufort rode into the yard, tipped his hat to Elgie and passed by to where Wallace was at work, and said:

"Wallace, have you heard the news?"

"What news?" asked Wallace.

"Why, about Edward Clifford. He borrowed three hundred dollars, and induced his father and brother to indorse for him, and has since left the country," said Dr. Beaufort.

"Where has he gone, doctor?"

"Nobody knows," he replied.

All this time Dr. Beaufort was watching Elgie to see how she would take the news, and then rode off toward Onoco. Wallace asked Elgie if she believed what the doctor had said, but she said that she did not. She had resolved within her own mind to dismiss him, though she had said nothing to him about it, and had not mentioned the matter at home. She felt that now she had lost all confidence in him, and she sometimes thought that he wished to be free, so she would give him the privilege of releasing himself from their engagement. Entering the house she sat down and sent him the following letter.

CHAPTER LXI.

ELGIE'S LETTER AND EDWARD CLIFFORD'S ANSWER.

"MR. EDWARD CLIFFORD: The old saying is, 'love is blind,' but the scales have fallen from my eyes at last, so that I think I can see clearly. The one in whom I once had every confidence I now have none, and upon the reception of this letter you may consider yourself free from me forever, to marry whom you please.

"Respectfully,

ELGIE HOWARD."

She started to the post-office, and mailed the the letter with a sad heart, yet with independence of character. She then told her mother what she

had done, who said she thought she had acted wisely, and told her that while she was absent at Auburn, Wallace had said that Edward Clifford asked him, the last time that he was at the Hall, whether Elgie's father intended giving her three or four hundred dollars when she got married. Wallace answered that he did not think her father would give her anything. Mrs. Howard then said:

"Elgie, that convinced me that he was after the money more than he was the girl."

She said she did not blame him for wanting a start in the world, but she thought that he would have shown more sense in keeping it to himself. Mrs. Howard thought that it was very short-sighted to say the least, for Edward to ask Elgie's brother such a question. She said:

"If you had asked my advice I should have told you to do just as you did, as I did not like his treatment of you at Auburn. I never liked his keeping company with two girls at once. A young gentleman or lady who will trifle with any one's affections are not worthy of the one with whom he or she trifles," and she concluded her remarks by saying, "Perhaps there is a better day coming for you yet."

"I will live in hopes and die in despair," said Elgie. The week rolled round. Mr. Howard returned from Onoco one evening and handed Elgie a letter, which she opened and read:

"BLUE ROCK, June 8th.

"MISS E. HOWARD: I received a letter from you not many moments ago. There are several letters before me awaiting answers, but yours comes first.

I have written four letters to you, and two to your sister in your care, and all that I have received in return is your silent contempt of spirit. So you upbraid me and cast me off forever! I presume that you have found one that you consider superior to me, and upon whom you will place your affections. If so I must submit. I have but one lady correspondent in whom I can have confidence now, and that is my mother. I shall never marry.

"I remain you friend,

EDWARD CLIFFORD."

Elgie folded the letter and laid it in her trunk. As time rolled away, people would ask Elgie how it came that she and Edward Clifford did not get married. She would laugh aud say, "Oh, he mittened me." Shortly after she received this letter from Edward, she was invited to spend the evening at Mr. Clifford's. Dr. Beaufort had found it out through Elgie's father, and about 7 o'clock in the evening he put in his appearance. Mrs. Clifford said, "Elgie, Dr. Beaufort has followed you." Just then he came in, and after greetings, said, "I knew that you were here, Miss Howard." He had hut just seated himself when two of Mrs. Clifford's sons came in, and several of the young people of the neighborhood came to spend the evening. As they were seated in conversation, Dr. Beaufort came forward, and addressing Elgie, he said:

"Miss Howard, I have finished my medical studies. Do you think that I could now get Dr. Howard's consent for you to marry me?"

To this she replied, "I have no doubt but that you could, for my father has often told me that when I marry I will throw myself away; and I have no doubt but that you can get their consent without any trouble."

The company roared and laughed, for they saw he was doing it to ridicule Elgie. One of them said, "Doctor, you have received your answer." Dr. Beaufort then left the room and said, "I will get even with her yet; I am determined."

Dr. Beaufort asked Elgie to ride to the hall with him in his carriage. She told him that if she did not remain over night she would return with her brother, which she did.

All of that summer Elgie assisted her mother in doing the house-work, and went into company with her brother and Mr. Highland. Amos Canfield, a young gentleman, applied for the school for the following winter. One of the directors asked him if he would wait on Miss Howard.

"I do not know any young lady by that name," he replied.

"Well, the reason I have asked you is, that all the teachers wait on her, and I thought perhaps you would follow suit. You can have the school. We will want you to open school by the first of December," said the director.

"Very well," said Mr. Canfield, "that time will suit me."

Elgie had made up her mind to teach school for a living, and concluded to attend the district school. When school opened, Elgie took her books, and started for the school-house. She entered the

school-room, and finding the teacher had arrived, she bowed to him very pleasantly, and he returned it in the same pleasant manner. He then looked around the room to see if he could discover which one was Miss Howard without asking. He made up his mind that he had hit upon the right one, so he ventured to ask:

"What might your name be?"

"Elgie Howard," said she.

She then told him that she had taught school the past summer, and that she was anxious to qualify herself as a teacher. He promised to do all he could to advance her in her studies. In the evening he asked her for the privilege of accompanying her home from school. He said:

"I have to board among the scholars, and I will go with you to the Hall, if it is agreeable to you."

"It will be most agreeable," she said.

They wended their way to Grumble Hall. Ballquather swamp had been cleared off, with the exception of a few elm and beech trees. The stage had long since ceased its rattling along the road, and the hack had taken its place to carry passengers and mail from Sewellen to Wartell. One evening Mr. Canfield told Mrs. Howard what the director had said to him about waiting on Miss Elgie. He said:

"It made me have a great curiosity to know who she was. I understand she is going to marry Ed. Clifford. He is not worthy of her; I know him well."

Mrs. Howard replied that she did not think that

Elgie and Edward would ever be married. Not long after that Elgie received Edward Clifford's wedding card, and all was settled. He wrote that he was married and happy. She attended school during the winter. Mr. Canfield's brother taught in Onoco, and they often met at the hall. Elgie, Wallace, and the Canfield brothers attended singings, parties, and other places of amusement together. Henry had married a strange lady from the East, a niece of Mr. Sterling's, several years previous, and had begun the study of medicine. He called at the hall quite frequently. He asked Elgie one evening if she remembered the night she rode home with him on horse, after she refused the company of Mr. Colton, at Mr. Harlan's. Elgie replied:

"Indeed I do. I shall never forget that, nor the night that you and Wallace dressed up in Mina's and my clothes, and passed off for us on the skating rink. Those were times never to be forgotten. Henry, you have settled down in life, and are preparing to practice medicine. I wish you success; you have always been like a brother to me. You will find that when you, as a physician, come to cope with the world, that you know, nothing of it, and you will feel that you have lived in a sphere of darkness, and been blinded to the true condition of society."

"A physician, 'tis true, has a good opportunity to learn the condition of society, and if I live I expect to see the time when I shall almost lose confidence in humanity, and I shall remember your words, Elgie," he said.

Spring was again close at hand. The snowbird had made its winter visit, and was now disappearing to give place to the peewee and bluejay. The hooting of the owl, which they had so often heard on the skating park, had ceased. The rabbits could be seen hopping through the orchard.

The aurora borealis would soon appear, making the northern sky a scene of grandeur. Mr. Canfield announced that the school would close the next week. Elgie had improved rapidly in her studies, and felt sad to think that the pleasant associations with her teacher and the scholars would soon cease. The time soon arrived, tokens of remembrance were given by Mr. Canfield to his scholars, the books were packed, farewells were spoken, and they all filed out of the school-house, leaving it tenantless. Mr. Canfield promised to visit the hall in a few days, which he hid.

Dr. Howard found fault with Wallace continually, and was cross and crabbed all of the time. He would abuse Mrs. Howard with words, but did not dare to do so in actions. Mrs. Howard worked hard to save money, so that her son could pay for the farm, for she lived in fear that his father would take the place back, and she knew that she could not live without Wallace. After the district school had closed, Elgie started out in pursuit of a school for the summer. Learning that Dr. Beaufort's father was a director, she called on him and made known her errand. Mr. Beaufort told her that he was willing that she should have the school if the other two directors would give their consent. She then called on

them, and they were willing. She then returned to Mr. Beaufort and told him of her success, to which he replied: "Miss Howard, you may then consider yourself engaged to teach the school. I learn that you have had good success where you have been teaching, which speaks well for you."

She then asked: "Mr. Beaufort, when do you wish me to open the school?"

"In about four weeks, say the first Monday in May," said he.

"That will suit me, and now it is understood that I am to commence school the first Monday in May," said Elgie. "All right, replied Mr. Beaufort. Mrs. Howard was rejoiced when Elgie told her she had secured the school. Her father smiled and said: "You have conquered at last and got your education."

"Yes," said she. "But I can not thank you for it, father; I have got it by pushing my way through thorns and briers, and I have yet to obtain a great deal before I am educated. What we learn at school is only a stepping stone to education. We very often find those who have attended school for years, and yet are ignorant on most subjects outside of their books. They may be able to talk of the styles of dress and the fashions, but when they attempt to talk upon the subject of religion, history, politics, or the laws of their own State, they are utterly ignorant. This is the kind of knowledge I desire to have, though I may never attain it."

Doctor Howard replied: "Elgie, I am glad to hear you speak so. When does your examina-

tion take place?"

"Next week; Cousin Annie Negale and I are going together."

The morning of the examination arrived, and Mr. Negale took Anna and Elgie to Wartell in the carriage. Trembling with fear and embarrassment, they entered the examination room. The teachers from all parts of the country had congregated, and were seated about the room. She went through her examination in a state of excitement, and she felt thankful when it was over; but she was very anxious to know her fate. She and her cousin returned home full of hope, and at the end of the week Dr. Howard returned from the village, and handed Elgie a letter post-marked "Wartell." With trembling hand she opened it, and found a certificate for one year, the longest period of time granted to any of the teachers without a re-examination. How her heart bounded with joy! and all the family rejoiced with her.

The next week Dr. Beaufort called and asked Elgie if he might see her certificate. She handed it to him, and he remarked:

"That is the best certificate I have seen from any of the teachers. You are going to teach in our district, I understand. I am glad of it. I presume I shall see you often, for you will be at my father's a good portion of the time, as he is a director. I wish you every success, Miss Howard."

CHAPTER LXII.

ELGIE LOSES HER SCHOOL—ARDEELA'S MIND WRECKED.

After leaving the hall Dr. Beaufort went direct to Mrs. Fuller, a warm friend of Elgie's and told her that Elgie had the best certificate he had seen, but remarked: "That is all the good it will do her," and laughed a sinister laugh. The week before she intended to commence her school Hugh Moorland called at the hall, and informed her that her school had been given to Miss Pollard. The same day Mrs. Fuller arrived and told her what Dr. Beaufort had said to her. Mrs. Fuller said:

"That explains it all, Elgie. The doctor has influenced his father to give the school to Miss Pollard to spite you."

"Mother, do you not see the cloud following me?"

The schools were all taken by this time but the one in the Howard district. Mrs. Howard called on one of directors to ascertain if Elgie could have the school. He replied, "Dr. Howard is able to provide for his daughter. I will give the school to some poor girl."

"You know that Dr. Howard does not provide one penny for his daughter, and that she is as wholly dependent on the world for a living as any poor girl, only that she has a home with her brother when she works for it."

Mrs. Howard returned home down-hearted and

sad, and that week the directors engaged Miss Susan Royland, a strange lady, to teach the school. Elgie then gave up for the time, and assisted her mother in housework. Her father, when in ill-humor, would taunt her about spending her time attending school, and not being able to make use of her education. He would sometimes say, "You had better followed serving, and laid up the money to take care of you in sickness or old age. You need not depend on me, for I will not clothe you."

"Father, the Bible says: 'He that provideth not for his own household, has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel,'" said Elgie.

"I want none of your impudence," he said.

"I did not know that it was impudent to quote Scripture," she said.

He smiled, and left the room. Mrs. Howard had not heard from Ardeela for some weeks, when to their astonishment, the door opened, and Ardeela stepped in, and throwing her arms around her father's neck, she said, "O, save me! Don't let them get me." She then flew to her mother and Elgie in the same wild way. Mrs. Howard exclaimed:

"O! My God! Ardeela has lost her mind."

They all wondered how she ever reached home, and were terribly shocked. Mrs. Howard told the doctor to go for Dr. Duncan, which he did. In the meantime Mrs. Howard calmed Ardeela, and gave her something to eat. Dr. Duncan came, and said the disease was caused by nervous prostration, and with proper care she would recover in a

few weeks. Ellen Young called, and saw the condition of Ardeela. Elgie said:

"Ellen, don't speak of this to any one, for if Ardeela recovers, and finds that it was told that she was insane, it will make her feel bad."

Ellen promised that she would not speak of it to any one, but as soon as she left the hall she told several of it. They asked Elgie if it was true, and she replied that it was only a slight trouble caused by prostration of the nervous system, and that the doctor said it would not last long.

After a few weeks of rest Ardeela recovered, and Ellen Young told her that Elgie had spread the report all through the neighborhood, that she was insane. This angered Ardeela, and Elgie had to suffer for it. If Ardeela hated Elgie before, she hated her doubly now. When she was visiting in the Keystone State, she gave Elgie such a reputation that her cousin had no desire to see her, but said that he would visit them. When he arrived and met Elgie, he thought, "Can this be my cousin, Elgie Howard, that Ardeela represented in such a bad light to me?" He then told Elgie of Ardeela's misrepresentation, and said:

"I have found it all false, and I have no other cousin I value as highly as you. After this I shall not believe what I hear, until I know that it is true. Persons are frequently misrepresented by their nearest relations; and need we wonder, then, that strangers seek to injure the innocent? And when your own family speak against you, it is not to be wondered at that strangers believe what they

say. I am going to leave, Elgie, but you always do right. You are one that will make friends wherever you go, or wherever you are placed in life. I believe you are one doomed to trouble, but remember you can always count on me as one of your friends. Although I came to the hall opposed to you, cousin Elgie, I leave it prepossessed in your favor."

William Howard brought two presents, one for Ardeela and one for Elgie, and when he saw how Ardeela had misrepresented her sister he gave the most valuable one to Elgie.

Miss Royland opened her school. A few weeks after she had commenced teaching, Elgie called on her, as she felt that she was a stranger, and she wanted to visit the school where she spent so many pleasant hours the winter before. She had a pleasant call, and when she left she invited Miss Royland to call at the hall. They judged from Miss Royland's conversation that she was on intimate terms with highly respectable people in Wartell, but on further acquaintance they found that she was almost a stranger there, having come from Albany but a short time previous. The Howard family were not very favorably impressed with her, except Wallace, who was thrust through the heart by Cupid's dart. She would come to the hall and visit Wallace, and would keep his private company. Mrs. Howard told Susan one day that it was not proper for her to come to the hall to meet Wallace, but if she was determined to keep his company, she must have him come to the place she called her home. Mrs. Howard

then said to Wallace one day, "Wallace, Susan Royland is no such a lady as you would choose for a wife. You know that I will have to live with her, and that my life has been one of trouble. And now, my dear son, do not place me where the cloud that has darkened my pathway will grow darker than ever. I entreat you, my son, to let the words of your mother be your guide. Susan is a girl I do not like, and if you marry her she will make a wreck of your life. You are blinded by her, and if she had the best disposition in the world she would not make a farmer's wife. Why do you not marry the young lady upon whom you have been waiting, and I would give my full consent. If not her then marry some one with whom you are better acquainted, but do not take up with a person you know nothing about. Susan was brought up by a wealthy uncle, and has been taught to live without work, with the exception of the few years she has been teaching school. She knows nothing of a country life, nor of what a farmer's wife has to do. I have worked hard to help you to pay for the place; if you marry her you will never pay for it. Susan will have to keep a girl, for she is one who will never work. When you cannot pay your own sister for working for you, how are you going to keep hired help? And if you marry her, I will not do the work."

Wallace said, "She says that she can do all kinds of housework, and that when we are married the girls can have the same privileges that they now have, and that she does not want you to work."

"That is a very nice song now, but another will be sung before you are married a year. I say, once more, my son, pause before you take the step. It is your mother who speaks to you for your own good first, and the good of her family as a secondary thought," said Mrs. Howard. But his poor mother's words fell upon stony ground.

CHAPTER LXIII.

WALLACE HOWARD'S MARRIAGE—ELGIE HOWARD'S DEPARTURE.

Susan Royland continued to come to the hall. Mrs. Howard told her that she and Wallace would never live happy together. "You should marry a man of wealth, so that he could keep hired help for you. When Wallace brings a wife here I shall cease my labor. His father has given him enough in the farm to pay for keeping me. I have worked four years to assist Wallace in getting out of debt. Now if he encumbers himself with a wife, he will have the rest to do himself," said Mrs. Howard.

Miss Royland's school closed, and in a few weeks after Wallace Howard announced the day of his marriage, and invited his sisters to attend the wedding. Certain complications caused by Susan prevented them from attending. Wallace left the hall alone, and was absent two days, when he returned, bringing his bride with him. For the first week she seemed very nice and social. She

used Mrs. Howard's furniture, and that of Elgie and Ardeela, having brought none of her own to the hall. Mr. Canfield came to spend the evening with Elgie, and Susan told her that after that night she could not afford to keep lights and fuel for her to entertain company. Elgie spoke to his brother about what his wife had said, but he sided with her. Miss Pollard came to spend the afternoon with Elgie, and she desired to get the supper. Susan Howard replied:

"I am the landlady, and I shall attend to that matter myself; and after this I am not going to have you here entertaining company for me to wait on."

"I did not ask you to wait on my company, nor do I wish you to do so. I prefer to wait on them myself," replied Elgie.

"I am not going to be at the expense of keeping company for you," she said.

"You informed Wallace before you became a member of this family that we were to have the same privileges that we then had. But it has turned out just as mother and I said it would. And now, Susan, before you get elated over having your name changed from Miss to Mrs., and go to showing so much authority over this house, you had better get some furniture of your own, and have Wallace pay me one dollar and twenty-five cents per week for one year and ten months that I did the work for his hired hands, with a little assistance from mother, for when I was not teaching or attending school she had to weave to fur-

nish money to buy us clothing, and enable Wallace to pay for the farm."

"I will speak to Wallace about it. He told me that he did not owe you anything," said Susan.

"I can prove my contract," said Elgie.

Thus ended their conversation. She had received nothing but her board during all this time.

William Markland, an old friend and schoolmate of Dr. Howard, settled several counties distant from Onoco, and his family visited several times at the hall, after Elgie was grown to be a young lady. Mrs. Markland concluded to try a Western home, and moved beyond the Father of Waters, settling on the prairies in what was then termed the far West. Mrs. Markland kept up a correspondence with the Howard family, and frequently wrote for Elgie to come West and teach school, but she felt as if she could not leave her mother, and she answered Mrs. Markland to that effect. Lucy Markland concluded to sail on the sea of matrimony, and became the bride of Albert Malcolm. After Lucy's marriage she continued to write to Elgie to come West, as she had a fine young man, Mr. Carlon Malcolm, whom she would like very much to have Elgie marry. She finally sent Carlon's picture to Elgie, with his consent to marry her. Malcolm had a picture of Elgie, and Carlon took a very great fancy to it, but when she received Carlon's she did not like his looks, and she said to her mother:

"If Carlon Malcolm's picture does him justice,

Lucy will have to keep her prairie chicken, for I could not fancy him."

"He might look better than his picture represents him," said Mrs. Howard.

"That is true; I should not be so premature in my judgment. But I think I can read his character in the picture," said Elgie. "But it is not likely that I will ever see him, he is so far away, and I could not think of leaving you, unless it were a case of necessity, and then I should expect to be with you again very soon, for if I ever marry, you shall have a home with me, and Wallace can have have the twelve hundred dollars that father has given him for your support. You are certainly in the lion's den, and I will do all that I can to get you out of it as soon as possible."

"I know you will, my dear child. If it was not for you I would give up in despair. But, Elgie, never marry a man that you do not love, for the sake of giving me a home."

The fall winds were blowing, and the cloud was dark over the hall. Not a ray of sunshine shone through one of its windows. Susan Howard had darkened the home forever. The brown and sear leaves, encircled with a beautiful tinge of red, were floating through the golden sunshine, and alighted softly on the earth, to wither and moulder away. The black crow perched in the pear tree in front of the hall, and sent up his loud notes of "caw, caw, caw," and then raised his wings and flew away toward the south. The crow had just left his perch, when a flock of black-birds flew into the top of the tree; one alighting on the topmost branch sent

forth his song alone for a few moments, then the whole family joined as in a chorus, and twittered their sweet notes together, before they took their flight. The tears came to Mrs. Howard's eyes, as she said: "These beautiful birds sing lovely, but it seems that they are only here to make the hall more lonely and us more sad. Elgie, I lay awake last night, and thought that it will not be long before you will have to leave this home. I can see that Susan is working her cards with Wallace, and she will soon win the day."

Elgie had taken the loom down previous to house-cleaning, some weeks before. Mrs. Howard wished to weave a short piece of carpet, and she asked Wallace to assist in setting up the loom again. Elgie had carried up as much of it as she was able to carry. Emma Highland came just then, and Wallace said, "Elgie, you good-for-nothing, lazy thing, go to the cellar and bring up the loom. You never have earned the salt in your mush.".

This abuse enraged Emma Highland, and she spoke up and said, "I am afraid, Wallace, you have one in your family now that won't never earn that much." And Elgie replied:

"Wallace Howard, you will get your pay for this unkindness."

He informed her that day that she was not needed at the hall, as Susan said she could do the work herself, and he could not afford to keep so large a family.

"Why, you managed to keep a much larger one before you were married to Susan, and there was no complaint made. You had your bound

boy and your two cousins, Charles and Henry Damson, and you never thought of complaining of expenses or anything else," said Elgie. "I will go, but remember, Wallace Howard, that God will reward you for this."

That day Elgie received a letter from Black Rock. She opened it and found it was from Lucy Malcom, urging her to come west and teach school. Lucy wrote, "If you will come, we will be mother, brother, and sister to you. You can have your home at mother's and teach in the district in which she lives. My two brothers are directors, and they say that you can have the school at forty dollars a month, and your board shall not cost you anything the first year. I shall claim you all your spare time, and by the time you have been here a year, I hope to have your name changed to Malcolm."

Dr. Duncan came in a few moments after she received Lucy's letter, and she handed it to him to read. He read it, and said that it was a good letter. She then told the doctor that she had been excused from the hall, so her brother had at least informed her that morning. Dr. Duncan said, "I wish there was room for you in our house. I could give you a home, but it would be unpleasant, as my mother and sister both reside with us."

"Thank you, doctor, for your kindness. What do you advise me to do?" said she.

"I would advise you to go. In a couple of years you can earn enough to buy a home for you and your mother, and then you can live together."

"Well, I will see if my father will give me money enough to pay my traveling expenses," said Elgie. The doctor and Mrs. Howard entered the room. She asked her father for the money, and told him Dr. Duncan advised her to go. She then asked her mother if she was willing she should go. Her mother said, "I will have to be, for I do not know what else you are to do." Dr. Howard said he would give Elgie forty-two dollars, and not one cent more. It was decided that she should go, and she wrote her friend, Lucy Malcom, to that effect, naming the day that she should start.

During the past summer Elgie had taught Oriental pearl painting now and then, and with the money she saved from that, and with what her mother gave her from the earnings of her weaving she had been enabled to purchase quite a nice wardrobe. Three days before Elgie left the hall the two Mr. Canfields called on her and begged of her to remain at home. They said she could have a home at their house. But she said:

"I have written to them that I will come, and that they shall not hire any other teacher. I dislike to leave my mother and friends, but I shall go; for home is not home to me any more. The fond brother that once loved me, and whom I once loved, is now a stranger, and the poisoned arrow of jealousy has fastened itself securely in his breast, and has left no place for me to rest my feet, or a place whereon I am welcome to lay my head."

Amos Canfield replied, "I know that your sit-

uation is unpleasant, yet I do not like to see you start, and especially to go alone."

"Yes," replied Elgie, "I know all that, but I must go. We have spent many pleasant hours together, you as my teacher and friend, and I as your pupil. Many are the hours we have spent within this hall in joyous mirth, now gone forever. But I trust that you will not forget them, and remember Elgie Howard, the unfortunate girl, as your friend." She said farewell, and the two brothers walked down the path that led to the road.

Mamie Highland came the night before she left to bid her good bye, and she told Elgie that her brother would not come, for he felt badly to think that she must go. He had waited on Elgie as a friend and brother, and she seemed very near to him. Dr. Duncan, with other friends, called to bid her good bye and extend to her their best wishes for her future prosperity. Morning came, and the sun rose bright and clear, though the air was quite chilly. Mrs. Howard arose early to attend to every little kindness for Elgie, and with tearful eyes she prepared breakfast with the thought that perhaps it was the last time and opportunity she would ever have of doing for her darling child, as she knew that death might claim either or both of them before they would meet again. Wallace drove the carriage to the door and Dr. Howard assisted him in loading the trunks. Elgie bade the family good bye, but the bitterest pang was parting with her mother. To think of leaving her under the care of Susan Howard was a ter-

rible thought. When Elgie looked back she saw Susan trying to shed tears; but the hypocrite's smile shone so bright that her attempt to cry was a failure. Elgie was seated in the carriage beside Wallace, who was her brother by name, but far from it at heart. As they passed the Highland farm young Highland waved his handkerchief in the air for an adieu. When they reached Onoco Dr. Duncan and his wife came out and wished her a safe journey. When Dr. Howard gave her the forty-two dollars he said:

"Elgie, I do not want you to show your face here at the hall again for five years, for I will do nothing more for you until that time."

She thought, "Can it be, that I am going to the far west among stranger friends, with the dismissal from my mother and home for five years? And these the farewell words of my father? God forbid!" But go she must, and what her fate would be she could not tell, and now she had no home to return to. She said before leaving her brother:

"Wallace, be kind to our mother while I am gone. If you are not, God will curse you. Susan does not like mother, and she will try to make you believe that mother is to blame, if there is any trouble between them. Mother, you know, is a woman of principle, while your wife is just the reverse. She is a cunning, scheming, selfish person. You will find that she will look out for herself, whether you or anyone else is looked after or not. She will never work, and she will plan some way to get a hired girl. If you had married the girl that we wished you to, and that

you intended to, how happy we all might have been. Your own sister would not now be driven from home a wanderer on the face of the earth, and alone without a home except among strangers, neither would Ardeela be."

Wallace replied, "I have seen my mistake in choosing my companion, but it is too late now to repent, and I will be obliged to do the best I can. That love is blind, is an old but true saying. I thought that you and mother were opposed to my marrying her because you did not like her. But I can see now why you were. Elgie, do not harbor harsh feelings against me. It is Susan's fault that you are obliged to leave home."

To this she replied, "Wallace, you should have been boss of your own house in this matter. You know you owe me for one year and ten months' work at one dollar and twenty-five cents per week, that you was to pay me when the farm was paid for. Now, when do you think that I will receive it? I can answer it, Wallace," she said, "and my answer will be, Never, never."

Her brother replied, "Yes, Elgie; I will pay you some day, if I live."

They had reached the depot at Wartell. Wallace unloaded the trunks and carried them to the baggage-room, and ascertained that the train would not leave before 8 o'clock that evening. Her brother came in and said he must return home, and she would have to care for herself till evening, and bidding her good-bye, he seated himself in his carriage and drove away. She was alone. She then went up street to a hotel and got her supper,

and then returned to the depot to await the train. A thousand thoughts flitted through her mind. "Breaking ice," she said to herself, for that was what was remarked the day she was born; although it was in the month of August, a crust of ice had broken the night before, and Mrs. Smith remarked, "This child will break ice all through her life." She continued, "The cloud is following me. There may be a storm in the distance that I have yet to meet, but I hope that He that guides the storms ane rules over the earth, will take care of me if I put my trust in Him. And, O, my God, watch over my dear mother; I pray Thee let no evil befall her, and may we soon meet again. Protect me on my journey and through all my undertakings." She finished her prayer with a lighter heart than when she began, for she felt that she had sincerely asked God to guide her aright. While she was waiting for her train, a gentleman came into the depot, whom she recognized as one she had often seen in conversation with her father when at Wartell, though she did not know his name. She thought he recognized her as he spoke to her as he came in, and then asked her which way she was going. She replied, "I am going West." He then kindly asked her if she had any baggage to check, and she told him that she had two trunks.

"Then I will get one checked as my baggage and hand you both checks, or else you will have to pay extra baggage charges."

Elgie thanked him, and bought her ticket, while the gentleman was seeing to having her baggage

checked. It was not long before the whistle of the iron horse was heard. Mr. Bartly, the gentleman who had now introduced himself to her by his attention to the baggage, helped her on the cars and took a seat beside her, though she did not tell him who she was. She felt sad, but was glad that she had, as she supposed, a friend and acquaintance for company. She began to feel sick with headache, and Mr. Bartly told her to stop off at Barliston and stay all night, and it should not cost her a cent. With this remark she straightened up, and asked him if he knew who he was talking to. He said, "No."

"Well," said she, "I began to think you did not. I am Dr. Howard's daughter, of Onoco. I do not stop off with gentlemen."

Mr. Bartly was taken back, for he never thought of her knowing him, or ever having seen him when talking to her father. He told her that he meant no harm, and he hoped she would never speak of it so that his wife would hear of it. She replied:

"You are a perfect scoundrel, Mr. Bartly, trying to take advantage of a young lady traveling alone. You have a daughter. How would you feel if she was going alone on a journey and some man would deceive her as you were laying your plans to deceive me? Remember that 'as you do unto others so it will be done unto you,' and you a church member. How can you enter the house of God with a conscience so seared with guilt?"

Mr. Bartly replied: "Miss Howard, you have

taught me a lesson. I would shoot any man who would take the advantage of my daughter."

"Then remember that other people's daughters are as precious to them as your daughter is to you," said Elgie.

He then remarked: "I will leave you at the next station, and if you always take the same stand that you have taken to-night, you will go safely through this life."

The train stopped, and Mr. Bartly left the train. She thought, "If this is my first introduction on leaving home, what will be my ending." Just then the sleeping car conductor came through the car, and asked her if she did not want a berth. She said that she did not. He replied:

"You better take it. It is the only one left, and if you are going on a long journey you will be very tired, and it will cost you but fifty cents."

She finally concluded to take it. She lay down and closed her eyes, but not to sleep, for she was too nervous to sleep, and there were too many thoughts flitting through her brain. About an hour after she had gone to lie down, and all the passengers were locked in the arms of Morpheus, the conductor came carefully along in front of Elgie's berth, and, kneeling down, he placed his ear close to Elgie's head to ascertain if she was asleep. She began to think that he came there to rob her. She called out:

"What are you here for?"

He jumped up quickly, and said he had dropped his pocketbook. By this time a number of the passengers awoke. She left her berth at an

early hour and returned to the car, and knew that the conductor had told her a falsehood about the pocketbook. She was tired and weary, and every mile took her that much farther from home.

At 11 o'clock in the morning she heard the whistle of the engine, and she knew they would soon be whirling into the depot at Chicago, that great city of the west. Soon they reached it, and Elgie was assisted off from the cars by the conductor. She inquired for a first class hotel. The 'bus driver advised her to go to the Massasoit house, and as she was a stranger she did not know where to go, so followed his advice. She reached there and was shown to the sitting-room, which was so cold that she had to keep her shawl around her. When the gong sounded she went into the dining-room and seated herself at the table to eat, but she concluded from the looks of the table that the house had a big name without the qualities to back it. She could not eat, and she then tried to drink her coffee, and it tasted as if it had been made of wheat. So she left the table and returned to the sitting-room. While she was sitting, thinking, wondering where she could go to get something to eat, a gentleman came into the room and asked her if she would not step out to the dining-room and have dinner. She thanked him and said she believed not. She then asked him the price of a meal. He replied: "One dollar." After he had left the room she went down to the depot to ascertain what time the train would leave on which she wanted to go. She met a policeman as she entered the depot, and asked him if he

could direct her to a hotel which was not "all name and nothing to eat," telling him at the same time of the hotel she had just left and their charges He then kindly said he would show her to where she could get a good meal, and they had not gone very far before she entered the hotel and was served a splendid meal for only twenty-five cents.

She had to remain in Chicago till eleven o'clock that night, and at the same hotel where she was stopping she came across a gentleman and his wife and brother who were going on the same train. After a little time she engaged in conversation with the lady and found that they had boarded a cousin of Elgie's for nearly a year in Kansas. This, of course made her feel as if she was not entirely alone, and she found them very pleasant company during the evening. As it drew near train time they went to the depot and procured their tickets, and it was not long before the train was moving along slowly over the piles in Lake Michigan. After they reached terra-firma its speed increased until the view from the window made the woods look like a solid mass of timber. Some parts of the country were beautiful, while others strongly reminded Elgie of Ballqueather swamp, for here and there was seen a bunch of yellow flowers among the weeds, and a flock of quail would now and then ascend into the air and then apparently drop down in the fall grass. Onward sped the train, and at 11 o'clock in the morning they reached the "father of waters."

As she left the train she felt sick. What to do she did not know. The beautiful river was before

her, and the boat was there. She had the river to cross and must board the boat, for she was anxious to reach her journey's end. After she stepped aboard the steamer she noticed a gentleman and lady who seemed to be suffering in the same way. She spoke to the lady, who said:

"My husband and I are both sick, and as soon as we have crossed the river he will get a remedy for us, and you will share it with us."

"Thank you," said Elgie, "I shall ever be grateful."

It seemed as if the boat would never get across the river, and Elgie so much wished she were well, for she would have enjoyed it. It was a grand sight to see the flood of waters rolling along, and large steamers traveling along almost side by side. When the boat reached the wharf on the other side of the river they stepped on shore, and taking a 'bus were carried to the depot, which was situated in another part of the city, As soon as they reached the hotel the gentleman went to the nearest drugstore and procured the medicine and gave his wife and Elgie a dose, which very quickly relieved them of their sickness. She remained with her kind friends until 5 o'clock in the afternoon, when the train she must go on came tearing along. On entering the car Elgie found the seats all occupied save that in which an elderly gentleman was seated. He kindly offered her a seat with him, which she accepted, and he entered into a very pleasant conversation with her. She enjoyed that part of the journey, for the old gentleman was intelligent, and the time passed pleas-

antly. The train reached Tuskin about 7 o'clock in the evening. The rest of her journey, a distance of seventy-five miles, she would have to travel by stage and alone. She concluded, however, to take supper before she started, as she would have an hour's time. She seated herself at the table, and the waiter had just collected the charges of fifty cents for her meal, when a man came and told her that if she was going in the stage she would be obliged to go immediately. She thought this must be a plan to cheat her out of her supper, and she was assured of it by a gentleman who sat next to her. He said, "I am going the same road, and in the same stage that you are. Finish your supper; they won't leave you."

"Thank you," she said, "I will do so. I have often heard of how these games are played on travelers, but this is my first experience of this kind."

They finished their supper, and the stage did not start for ten minutes after they left the dining room. There were five passengers in the coach beside Elgie, three ladies and two gentlemen, and she was so glad, for she had been dreading this particular part of her journey. The horses started and the stage was soon rolling over the prairie. It was a lovely night, but Elgie's heart was sad and almost pierced to the core, with the bitter pangs of homesickness, as the thoughts of her mother and home crowded thick and fast upon her.

At last they reached Dumberton. It was 7

o'clock in the morning, and when they arrived they were told that the stage from there had left an hour before; so Elgie would be obliged to remain till 4 o'clock next morning. This worried her, as she needed to save her money. She told the landlady at the hotel how she was situated. She replied:

"Do not worry yourself; we will make your bill light."

She then showed Elgie to a room where she could refresh herself with a bath, and take a rest, if she wished. She then invited her to come to the dining room when she was ready to do so, and have some breakfast. Elgie was very much pleased with the landlady's appearance, and she thought she acted like a friend in need. She went to breakfast, which was nicely prepared, and ate a very hearty meal, for she felt hungry. Presently the landlady showed her to a room where she could lie down and rest, and she was soon fast asleep, being worn out and unwell. At 1 o'clock there was a rap at the door, and she was called to dinner. She arose from her refreshing sleep, and kneeling down, she offered a prayer and thanked her Heavenly Father that she had again, through his divine mercy, found a friend among strangers, and she thought how glad she would be to have her mother know how well she had been provided for, and how carefully the Lord was leading her along. She prayed for her unhappy mother and sister, not forgetting the father and brother who had deserted her.

After dinner the landlady took Elgie to the

parlor and introduced her to two gentlemen who were boarding at the hotel. She said:

"I do not hesitate to introduce this strange young lady. She is going a little further west to teach school, and, unfortunately for her, the stage had gone this morning before she arrived."

Then turning to Elgie, she said:

"Miss Howard, these gentleman have been boarding with me a long time, and I do not hesitate to present them to you."

After the introduction they entered into social conversation, and one of the gentlemen, Mr. Atwater, informed her that he was in the banking business in that place.

"I understand that you are going to teach school in this State," said he.

"That is my intention," she replied.

"Where are you from, Miss Howard, if it is a fair question?" he asked.

"From Onoco, Ohio," said Elgie.

"Ah, indeed, you have traveled a long way alone," said he.

"I have indeed, and I dreaded the trip, but I shall soon be at my journey's end," said she.

He then asked her her destination, and she replied "Black Rock,"

"Then, said he, "you are about fifty miles from there."

After conversing a short time he excused himself and went to his bank. The other gentleman, Mr. Cone, remained and entertained her very pleasantly. He said she would find the society of that State very different from that of Ohio, and

that they differed in their manners and customs from the people of the East. "I understood your name as Howard, did I not?"

"Yes, sir," she said.

"What is your given name, may I ask?"

"Elgie," she replied.

"And my given name is Edwin. If I should ever meet you again I should recognize you. Your expression of countenance is different from that of other persons, and one that would always be remembered by strangers," said he.

"I hope the remembrance may not be a bad one," said Elgie smiling.

"Not at all; on the other hand it will be a pleasant one. I think when you are a friend you are a true one. You never misconstrue the actions of others to be bad, and you never think that they will think amiss of you; therefore you are in danger. I have read characters for years, and it does me good to meet with one that is singular, like yours," said he.

"I will admit that I am somewhat singular, but I hope that I am none the worse for that," said Elgie.

"Pardon me, Miss Howard, I meant nothing wrong. I would rather encourage you than otherwise, as you are out in the world alone. Be watchful wherever you are, so that you do not become entangled in the snares that are set for you," said he.

Mr. Cone then left the room, and Elgie spent the afternoon with the landlady and in reading the

newspaper. In the evening Mr. Cone asked Elgie whether she ever danced.

"I do," she replied. "I think dancing one of the most pleasant pastimes we can indulge in."

"Would you accept an invitation from me to attend a dance this evening to be held across the street?" he asked.

"No, sir. I thank you for your kind invitation, but it would be very improper for me to attend a dance with a stranger in a strange place. Therefore you will excuse me," said Elgie.

"Certainly I will excuse you. I only asked you to go because I thought you were lonely, and it would be a good way to while away a few hours, and Mrs. Hatch would have accompanied you," said Mr. Cone.

"I prefer to remain at the hotel, she said.

Mr. Cone attended the dance, and Mr. Atwater spent the evening in the parlor with Mrs. Hatch and Elgie. They spent the time pleasantly, and finally Elgie asked to be excused, and said she would retire, and requested them to call her in time to take the stage at 4 o'clock in the morning. They promised to do so, but they forgot her, and she missed the stage and had to remain until evening. They made her bill very light, only charging her one dollar and a half for the whole time that she was there. The evening stage came rumbling along, and as she was ready to step into it, Mr. and Mrs. Hatch, Mr. Cone and Mr. Atwater stood waiting to see her off. She entered the stage, and found her companions consisted of one gentleman and three ladies. When the stage

started Elgie thought how much she did wish one of the ladies was going all the way through with her, for she would be afraid on the lonely prairies to ride alone with two gentlemen, and one of those the driver. After they had traveled about twenty miles the three ladies arrived at their destination.

CHAPTER LXIV.

ELGIE'S OFFER OF MARRIAGE—WANDERING THROUGH SNOW DRIFTS.

As the ladies left the stage cold chills crept over Elgie. She would now be alone with the gentleman in the stage. When the ladies had gone he moved over into the seat with her, remarking that as they were alone they would occupy the same seat. She told him, however, that she preferred to occupy that seat herself, and requested him to take his own. He did as she requested, and then asked how far she intended to travel. She answered him coolly, and said, "I am going to Black Rock," and that she had traveled from Central Ohio. He said, "I will compliment you as being a brave lady to undertake such a journey alone. But I see you understand how to travel, and as I have been so inquisitive as to inquire into your business, I will now tell you who I am and what my business is. My name is George Howell, I am from Boston, Massachusetts, my father keeps a fur store, and I go west every year to buy furs;

my destination is Fort Duluth. I am a single gentleman, and am an only son. I have three sisters. I judge you to be a single lady, are you not?"

"I am, and I am going west to teach school, or rather, I am west for that purpose," she said.

"Well now, as we have met on the prairie, I am going to make you a romantic offer. If, when we come to take breakfast, we are pleased with each other's appearance, I will agree to marry you if you will agree to take the step," said Mr. Howell.

"You may be a married man for aught I know, and I may be a married woman," she said.

"I will take the risk of your being single, and I will not ask you to be my wife until I can prove to you that I am what I profess to be. It is hard work to teach school, and if you become my wife you will have a rich home and everything to make you happy so far as I am concerned. So you may see, and know also, that I am not trying to deceive you. I will give you the address of the minister of the church that my parents are members of. I am not a member of any church myself. I will also give you my father's and mother's address, so that you can write to them. You can also write to our postmaster, so that I am giving you opportunities for finding out that I am the one I claim to be," said Mr. Howell.

She replied, "Your offers are very fair, seemingly. Perhaps, when you come to see me, you will be glad that I am not anxious to agree with your plans."

They rode along for miles over the prairie, the stage rocking to and fro, and the stage driver cracking his whip to urge the horses forward. Sometimes he would whistle, and again he would sing some merry song. Elgie thought this was indeed a romantic trip. When the stage stopped for breakfast, Mr. Howell assisted Elgie out, and showed her to the reception room, and then ordered breakfast for two, and it was not long before it was smoking on the table. Taking seats opposite one another, each had a good view of the other. After breakfast was over, Elgie asked Mr. Howell if he would please to tell the proprietor that she wished to see him, and settle her bill. He replied: "Your bill is settled. I paid it."

"Thank you, but I prefer to pay my own bills," said she, and offered him fifty cents.

"I will not accept it. You are a thousand times welcome," he said.

"I would rather that you would take it, for I do not like to accept favors from strangers unless I am obliged to do so," said Elgie.

"Well, you are obliged to accept of this," said Mr. Howell laughingly. The driver told them that he was ready to start, and they were soon seated in the stage. "Now we have seen each other, and I am ready to fulfil my offer on the conditions I made it to you. Will you accept?" he asked.

"I think not," said she.

"Are you displeased with my appearance?" he asked.

"I am quite pleased, but it would be running a great risk," she said.

"I cannot see it in that light, and think I have made you a fair offer," said he.

They had now arrived at her place of destination, and she was glad of it. Mr. Howell helped her out of the stage, helped the driver to carry her trunks to the house, and requested the privilege of calling to see her, as he said he thought she would think better of him if she was acquainted. He stood and talked some little time, and driver tola him they must be off. He bade her good-bye, and said, "The time will come, Miss Howard, when you will wish that you had accepted my offer."

The stage drove away, and she rapped on the door, which was opened by their oldest son, Mortimer Markland, one whom Elgie had never seen. He bade her welcome, and said they had looked for her the day before. She then explained to them how she had been detained at Dumberton one day and night longer than she had expected. Mortimer put her trunks in the room. By this time Mrs. Markland was dressed, and made her appearance. It was just four o'clock in the morning, and Mrs. Markland said, "Oh, Elgie, I am so glad you have come. Lay off your wraps, and wash yourself, and as it is so early, I will show you to your room, so that you can have a few hours' rest, for I know you are very tired."

She was glad to retire, and was soon sound asleep, and did not waken until the clock on the mantel struck nine, and Mrs. Markland called her

to breakfast. She went into the sitting room, where she was welcomed by Jay Markland and Sylvia. While they were at the breakfast table, Elgie delivered the messages that had been sent to the family by her parents, gave a description of her journey, and said that if she could have known the dangers to which she would be exposed, to say nothing of its loneliness, she would not have undertaken it at all; but she was thankful that she was safe, and she must send word at once to her mother. She left the breakfast table, and taking pencil and paper, she wrote the following letter to her mother:

"BLACK ROCK, November.

"DEAR MOTHER,—I arrived safe this morning, having been delayed one day longer than I expected, as I did not make connections at Dumberton. I am well, but tired out. The friends were very glad to see me, and are very kind. Do not worry about me, but take care of yourself, and take life as easily as you possibly can, for your way is paid. I hope it will not be long before we are together again. I will write you next week with all particulars of my journey. Love to father and Ardeela, and my friends.

"Your affectionate daughter,

ELGIE HOWARD."

Elgie had been there but a short time when James and Frank Darlington, sons-in-law of Mrs. Markland, and Lewis Pemberton, called to see her. These four families lived about a quarter of a mile apart. James and Frank Darlington were the directors in their school district. Elgie asked

them if she was to have the school as Lucy Malcolm had written her. She showed them her certificates, and they said they were very good. They agreed that she should have the school, and she was to visit among the friends until it was time for school to open.

"Then I may write to my parents that the school is mine," said Elgie, "for they will be anxious to know."

"You may write them that the school is yours," said James Darlington; and Elgie was so rejoiced that she could scarcely wait to write the next letter home. The second day after Elgie's arrival, Lucy Malcolm and her husband came to welcome Elgie to her western home. Lucy's sister, Mrs. Pemberton, came also. They were very glad to see her, and Mr. Malcolm and Lucy made arrangements for Jay Markland to bring her to spend a few days with them the following week.

Mortimer Markland was an old bachelor. He had been in the gold regions of California and he had become quite wealthy. He had always said he should remain single, and at his death his property should be divided among his brothers and sisters. Mortimer and Elgie became very good friends, and when she would absent herself for a day, he would say, "I am glad you have returned, I was lonely without you." This he would say in a laughing way, as they were always joking back and forth.

The week for Elgie's visit to Black Rock arrived. Before she started she went to her room, and kneeling down, she thanked God that she was

among friends, and that she would soon be able to provide for her dear mother, with honorable provision for herself. She felt that the dark cloud was passing away. "Yet," she said, "I must not be too sure; the sky has so often brightened for me, but a cloud soon obscured it." Her time was so taken up that she had scarcely taken notice of her prairie home. She walked out back of the dwelling and cast her eyes east, west, north, and south, and nothing could be seen but vast prairies, interspersed with groves of low trees, like oases in the desert. Farm houses were visible in the long distance, and where the prairie was not under cultivation were to be seen hazel and wild prairie grass. The rabbit and gopher were the most plentiful in that section, but now and then a gray wolf was to be seen. Jay Markland informed Elgie that the carriage was waiting, and she was soon seated beside him, and they started for Black Rock. As they left the gate Mortimer said:

"Good bye, my girl; do not stay long."

She replied, laughing: "I won't, Mort."

They had gone but a short distance when the horses became frightened and jumped to one side of the road. Jay reined them again in the road, when to their surprise there lay the lifeless body of a large gray wolf which had been killed by the dogs. It was not long before they reached Mrs. Malcolm's, who was glad to see them, and was waiting dinner. They sat down to the table, and Malcolm told Elgie that she had planned a little party there for her that evening, and reqested her

brother Jay to remain, but he said he could not, so left for his home shortly after dinner. Elgie then wrote home the good news, that she was to visit among friends till the time for opening school, and James and Frank Darlington had given her the school according to the promise made in Lucy's letter. She sealed the letter, and Mr. Malcolm took it to the office. When he returned he handed her two letters postmarked "Dumberton." She was indeed surprised upon opening them to find one from Mr. Atwater, the banker, and the other from Mr. Cone, both asking her the privilege of opening a correspondence with her. Mr. Atwater told her he was going to New York, and if the project met her approbation, he should be pleased to hear from her at once. Mr. Cone wrote about the same, and said he intended coming through that section of the country in the near future, and would like to call and see her if agreeable.

Mr. Malcom asked her whom she was acquainted with at Dumberton. She told them of her introduction to the gentlemen by her landlady, Mrs. Hatch, and that she was certainly surprised to receive the letters, and said she believed she should pay no attention to them. That evening she gave the letters to Mr. Darlington to read, that he might know that they were nothing more than friendly letters. He advised her to open a correspondence with the gentlemen, as he could see no harm or impropriety in so doing, as long as she had met them as she did. She told him she

wished him to advise her in all things as a brother would a sister, and he said he would.

The guests arrived for the party, and among them was Carlon Malcolm, whom Elgie had much rather not seen. She was introduced to all of the company, but she did not fancy Carlon, though she treated him with kindness and respect, and Lucy Malcolm seemed rather disappointed. The party passed off pleasantly, and the guests took their departure at an early hour. Carlon Malcolm remained about half an hour later, and was conversing with Elgie. He talked very plainly to her in regard to his feelings, but said he was waiting upon a young lady. She replied:

"I would not feel justified in accepting your company; but we can always be friends, the same as if I had accepted the offer you have made me to wait upon me."

He then left the house. The next morning Lucy asked Elgie how she liked Carlon, to which she replied, "I like him as a friend, but he is not my style of a gentleman," and nothing more was said on the subject. After visiting three days at Mr. Malcolm's, she returned to Mrs. Markland's. As she entered the door Mortimer said:

"I am glad indeed that you have returned, for I was lonely without you."

She laughed and said it was a good thing that she returned, for he might have pined away.

That evening Mortimer, Jay, Sylvia, and Elgie spent the evening at James Darlington's. Mr. Darlington asked Elgie if she knew that Andrew Holland was dead. She replied that she did not.

Mr. Darlington then said, "He was an uncle of mine, and his family lives only about sixty miles from here, and are quite often with us." Elgie was so surprised that she did not know what to think. She said:

"I knew that they went west, but I did not know what part they had gone to, as I heard nothing from them in four years. Are the boys married?"

Mr. Darlington replied, "Carlon is married, but Ira is not."

Elgie felt sorry for this, for she was afraid Ira might make her trouble. She remembered that he had said he would never marry anyone but her. She then said, "I always liked Carlon but I did not like Ira."

She spent that week visiting there and at Mr. Pemberton's, where she met Mr. Jenkins, who was from the city of P——, in the Keystone state, and who was boarding at Mr. Pemberton's. Mr. Jenkins was paying his addresses to Sylvia, and asked Elgie to use her influence in his favor. At the end of the week Mrs. Frank Darlington called at her mother's with a gentleman. When Elgie entered the room he grasped her by the hand, saying, "How glad I am to see you, and yet how surprised." She did not recognize him, and he said:

"Do you not remember Carlon Holland?"

"She said, "Yes, but I never should have known you, Carlon."

They talked for a short time, when he invited her to spend the evening with him at his cousin's, in company with Jay and Sylvia. They accepted

the invitation, and during the evening Carlon said that he would walk home with her, and visit on the way, if it would be agreeable to her. She said, "It will be after we leave the Darlington mansion." He then said:

"Elgie, Ira will be rejoiced that you have come. I wonder that he did not tell us you were coming."

Elgie replied, "He did not know it. I have never written him since I rejected him in the East, and that is four years ago. I never did like him."

Carlon replied, "Well, if he is my brother he has told me a terrible falsehood. He told me that he was corresponding with you, and that you and he were engaged, and that he was going East for you in the spring."

She was much surprised at this, and said, "It is a positive falsehood, and I will prove it to you when we arrive at the house. I did not even know that any of you were in the State until your cousin James informed me."

When they arrived at Mrs. Markland's she asked Carlon to go in and she would show him the letter that Ira had written her after she had discarded him years before. After Carlon had read the letter he exclaimed:

"What a base falsehood my brother has told."

She said: "Carlon, tell him for me that I do not want to meet him."

He then asked her when he could come for her to come and spend the time with them after the holidays.

She said, "You told me that Ira was going away on business; do not come for me before he

goes away; I will spend the two weeks with you and your wife while he is absent."

"I do not think that he will bother you after I deliver the message you send to him. Ira does not reside with us, but he makes his home with the family on the farm. I will come for you after the holidays," said Carlon, and bidding her good-night, started back to his cousin's.

The next day Mr. Jenkins invited Sylvia, Elgie, and the rest of the family, to spend Christmas evening at Mr. Pemberton's, and the day after Jay Markland invited her to attend an oyster supper at Marbleville. She thanked him and said that his invitation came too late, and she was very sorry, as she would like to attend the supper. That week the snow began to fall on the prairie. It fell lightly at first. Elgie told Mortimer that she thought she would go to Mr. Pemberton's that morning before the snow fell so deep, and she started. Mortimer said that he would come after her the next morning. The storm increased, and the snow fell almost in clouds, as it does on the western prairies. It was a lonely night for Elgie. Mr. Jenkins asked her to play a game of checkers that evening. While they were busy playing Mr. Pemberton came into the room, and said that Mr. Holland had come, with a sleigh and two horses. Elgie quickly asked:

"Which one of the Hollands?"

Mr. Pemberton said: "Mr. Ira Holland."

She excused herself to Mr. Jenkins, and went into the kitchen, where she burst into tears, for she felt that the dark cloud was still hovering over

her; she felt something she could not explain—it seemed to be a premonition of evil. Mr. Jenkins saw that she was feeling badly, and following her shortly, asked:

"Elgie, why are you crying? Is it because Mr. Holland has come?"

"It is," she said.

"Well, cheer up, I will see that he does you no harm," said Mr. Jenkins.

The next morning James Darlington came over in his sleigh. He said that Ira Holland had arrived, and that his wife was ill and would like to have Elgie come over and make some broth for her, as their girl did not know how to make it. Elgie knew that she must go with Mr. Darlington, but she did so very reluctantly. The snow was still falling. They arrived at the house, and when she entered the room Ira Holland was the first to meet her. Elgie shook hands with him coldly, and then went into the room where Mrs. Darlington was lying. She asked her how she was feeling, and inquired as to how she wished the broth prepared. Mrs. Darlington gave her the directions, and she left the room. She was not long in preparing the broth, and after Mrs. Darlington had finished eating, she gave Elgie directions for preparing dinner. As she was setting the table Ira Holland who had come into the dining room, said:

"I understand that you are going to teach school in this district in the spring."

"I am, Providence permitting,"

"There is a school in our county that wants a

teacher. It is a school of one scholar," said Ira.

Elgie replied: "I would not teach it. I prefer a school of forty or fifty scholars."

"That is right, Ira, persuade her to teach a school of one scholar," said Jane Darlington.

But Elgie replied, "Jane, I cannot be persuaded to teach that school,"

Dinner was now on the table, and all were seated. Elgie could scarcely eat; her heart was full. As soon as dinner was over she asked to be excused, and leaving the room she donned her bonnet and shawl and started for the Markland mansion. When she arrived she was very tired, as the snow was deep. Mortimer had received a sum of money from California, and had gone to take it to the bank. The family did not know just what time he would return. That night Elgie slept but little. It snowed all night, and next morning Mr. Darlington called and told them the stage had stopped running, on account of the deep snow, and as a consequence there would be no mail for a few days. In the evening Mortimer returned. He had not been to the bank, as they said, but had been to Marbleville. They all went to Mr. Pemberton's in a sleigh, and Ira Holland was there, and was the first to help Elgie out of the sleigh. Mortimer remained until after supper, and looked very sober. When the party broke up they returned in the sleigh, and Ira Holland came with them. It was late, and Mrs. Markland of course invited Ira to come in, and then she retired, leaving him and Elgie alone. She requested him to go, and return to his cousin's, as

she did not intend to keep any gentleman's company while she was in the West. Ira replied:

"You have kept company with Carlon Malcolm since you have been here, if I am not misinformed."

She said, at once, "I deny the charge. I talked with him one evening for half an hour, to settle a matter of which his sister-in-law had written me before I came here. And now, I request you to go."

"I will go," said he, "but I will never leave this place until you are my wife," and taking his hat he left the house. Elgie felt that the premonition was too true, and she sat down by the window. The fire was burning in the fire-place, which threw a bright light all through the room. The snow had ceased to fall, and the clouds were disappearing, and a star now and then peeped through them. All was silent, save the howling or bark of the prairie wolf; and Elgie gazed with a sad heart upon the pure white snow, as it lay upon the ground. She knew that there was some plot against her, and she thought, "Oh, if the stage would only run, that I could flee; and to where would I flee? I have no home." Tempest tossed, she knelt down and prayed, "Oh, my Heavenly Father, shield me in this my hour of danger, and save me from that man." She could go no further. Her brain reeled, and she fell to the floor. How long she lay there she did not know. When she recovered her senses she saw that the fire had gone out, and there was scarcely a shadow to be seen on the wall. She looked out

of the window, and the snow was again falling. She reached the bed, and throwing herself across its foot, she fell asleep.

In the morning Mrs. Markland came to her room and told her that breakfast was waiting. Mrs. Markland said, "Why, Elgie, did you sleep in your clothing last night?"

She replied, "Yes; my head hurt me so when I reached the bed that I did not feel able to undress."

"How is it this morning?" she asked.

"It is a trifle better. If Ira would leave, I would be happy. He is making trouble for me," said Elgie. After breakfast she seated herself in front of the fire in the sitting-room to lay a plan by which she could escape, if she found that she was really in the net, when James Darlington came in. "Good morning, Elgie, how do you feel this morning?" said he.

"I feel very poorly indeed," she replied.

"I would like to see you alone in the parlor for a few moments," said Mr Darlington; and she reluctantly followed him. He set a chair for her, and taking one himself, he said, "Elgie, I have to talk to you on a serious matter this morning. My cousin, Ira Holland, is a fine young man. He claims that you engaged yourself to him four years ago, and that now you wish to break the engagement."

"James Darlington, it is false. I never promised to marry him, nor did I know what part of the world he was in, until I came here. I can show you a letter to prove to you that I refused him,"

said Elgie. She then went to her trunk, and returning, placed the letter in his hand. He read it slowly, and then said, "I guess you engaged yourself to Ira after that."

"James, you know it is false, for I told you I disliked him always, and before I knew that he was in this part of the country," she said.

"Ira loves you, and you must be his wife. If you do not marry him, you cannot have the school, and then what will you do?" said Mr. Darlington.

"Is that the kind of man that you are? You told Lucy Malcolm to write me that if I would only come, you would be brother, sister, and mother to me, and that I should have the school. I came on that account. If you had not made those promises, I should not have come; and you have given me the school, and now you take it from me, because I will not marry a man whom I despise," said Elgie.

"I am doing by you as I would do by my own sister," he said, and with that he left the honse. As soon as he had gone, Elgie went to the sitting-room, and told Mrs. Markland what they were trying to do. Mrs. Markland replied, "They are doing all right. You will have a nice home, and we will visit you often." This remark from Mrs. Markland so staggered her that she almost fainted away. She thought that she would make one more attempt to find a friend, and if she failed in that, God only knew what would become of her. She put on her shawl and bonnet, and started out through the snow drifts. Every step she sank in



the snow to her knees. She thought, "Oh, my poor mother! If you could know to-day where your poor Elgie is wandering through the snow drifts to find a friend, and the cold prairie winds chilling her to the heart, oh! would you not fly to me and save me from that wretch?" She trudged along, praying that the earth might open and swallow her up, but her prayer was not answered. Step by step she traveled along, and finally reached the house of Frank Darlington. Ellen opened the door, and when she saw her she said, "Elgie are you crazy that you have come here such a day as this?"

"If I am not, I will be," said Elgie. She then told them what they were trying to do, and said, "Ellen, if I cannot find a friend in you and Frank to save me, I want to die."

Mrs. Darlington replied, "You are foolish, Elgie; we will have you married on Monday night. Mr. Holland has built him a fine house, and he worships you."

"I will die before I will be his wife," she said. "Strange that you wrote me to come here and now treat me this way. Have I done anything to displease you since I came?"

"No, Elgie, we all like you, but we think that every girl needs a home." said Mrs. Darlington.

"Then for heaven's sake let me make a home of my own choice." She threw herself down on the lounge, and Mrs. Darlington placed a pillow under her head. She had not lain there long when Ira Holland came in, and said, "Where is my runaway?"

"She is here," said Ellen.

"She will not run away after Monday night," said Ira.

"Stick to her, Mr. Holland, you will get a good wife; and, Elgie, we will have a nice wedding for you. We have the turkeys engaged, and those whom we wish to have are invited," said Ellen.

"I would not think that you would want a wife that despises you,"said Elgie.

"You will be contented after you marry the man you now despise; you will yet learn to love me," said Ira.

Ellen told Elgie that she would be obliged to return to Mr. Markland's in the sleigh with Ira, as she had no place for her to sleep. Ira picked her up and carried her to the sleigh, and she begged him to return without her, and leave her in peace; but he drove on, taking her to James Darlington's house. She asked James to let her write to her parents and get their consent and advice. James said, "No letters shall go. My cousin has fixed the rope to hang himself, and it is now your duty to save his life." While she was trying to escape the snare, Ira Holland was in the next room walking the floor like a madman. Elgie screamed out, "Oh, that the stage might come, that I could make my escape! James Darlington, if you carry out this terrible plot, I will never live with Ira Holland."

She went to bed that night and was taken with nervous spasms. James Darlington watched with her through them all, and still said that she must

marry Ira Holland. Her mind had weakened, the trouble was too much for her to bear. The next morning they took her to Mrs. Markland's. She did not sleep that night, and tried to pray, as was her custom all through life, and as her mother had taught her when she was but a child. She tried again, and prayed, "Father in Heaven, let some protecting arm be thrown around me yet, and save me from the fearful fate that awaits me; and if the galling chains of matrimony are thrown around me against my will, wilt Thou soon open an avenue for my escape. Father in Heaven, Thou knowest the thoughts of thy erring child, I will yet trust in Thee, knowing that Thou wilt not forsake me in this my terrible trial, or in the world to come. I will cling to Thee as a vine clings to the rock, and bear the burden as far as I am able." She then endeavored to sleep, but arose in the morning trembling and weak. She was called to breakfast, but could not eat. She went into the sitting-room and seated herself in front of the fire; she had been there but a few moments when James Darlington and Ira Holland came in. "How do you do this morning? We are going for a license this morning," said James Darlington. "I forbid you," said she, but with a sinister laugh he said, "Oh, we do not obey a child like you." When they returned James asked Elgie how she was feeling, and told her to cheer up, and she would be all right. She made no reply, but thought, "If they carry out this plot, I will flee at the first opportunity. I will not live with a man that I despise." She became so weak with

the thought of it that she lay down on the bed to rest. How true were the words of Mrs. Smith, "Remember the ice is on the water the 20th day of August, and this child breaks ice through life." The next day Mortimer disappeared. Elgie did not get to speak to him more than to say "good-morning," and she saw that he was shedding tears as he left the house. He said, "Elgie, I will be back this evening." His mother was in the room, as Mortimer was never left alone with Elgie for a moment after the plot was laid.

CHAPTER LXV.

ELGIE HOWARD'S MARRIAGE AND HER FLIGHT.

When evening came Elgie was lying on the bed crying. Her mind became bewildered. Mrs. Frank Darlington came to her and said, "Elgie, it is time for you to be dressed."

She replied, "I do not care to be dressed."

"But you must be," said Frank's wife.

Elgie's mind was now in such a condition that she thought she must obey. She arose and followed Mrs. Darlington into the next room, where she was dressed. She continued to cry. Her mind was benumbed with excitement. She had said in her own mind from the first, "I will never consent to be his bride. When the ceremony is performed I will say no." When the minister arrived Ira Holland came to the room. Mrs.

Darlington told Elgie to take hold of his arm and walk into the parlor. She obeyed. They walked up in front of the minister, the ceremony was gone through with the groom; then the minister turned to the bride and said, "Do you take this man to be your lawful and wedded husband?" Elgie made no reply, and that was the last that she knew for two hours, except at intervals. The minister pronounced them man and wife, then they led her to another room, and placed her in a chair. The first that Elgie remembered was that Mortimer said, "Elgie, if I had known what I now know, one hour before, I could have saved you."

"Save me yet to-night, Mortimer; O, my God, save me, that in the morning I can flee."

Mortimer replied, "I will try, Elgie."

Several times Mrs. Darlington asked Elgie to retire, but she would not. When the clock struck 3 in the morning, three of the women picked her up and carried her to bed. She knew no more until the next day, and then she was not able to sit up. On Wednesday she got up and dressed herself and came into the room. Mortimer said:

"Elgie, by the law you are bound to Ira Holland. If you leave him now, I am liable to be shot, but they are blaming me. If he mistreats you, let me know, and I will rescue you, even if I have to do so in the night. If you are able to travel, accompany him home to-day; but return here in three weeks."

"I will," said Elgie. Just then James Darlington came in, and asked her how she felt. She replied, "You will have to be in my place before

you will know." She said, "James, I wish you to write my father and mother, and tell them the circumstances of this marriage, and that you forced me to marry Ira Holland against my will, so that they will exonerate me from all blame. They will almost go wild, for they knew that I disliked him, and they could not bear with him themselves."

"I will write just what you have told me to, and I will exonerate you from all blame," said he. Ira came in, and said the sleigh was ready. Mrs. Markland helped Elgie to wrap herself so as to protect her from the cold. Mortimer accompanied them to the sleigh. Ira was holding the lines. Mortimer said:

"Elgie, return in three weeks. You promised to remain with me until spring when you came, and now I am going to hold you to your promise."

Elgie replied, "I will, you may depend upon it."

Ira Holland replied, "I will see about that. Perhaps you will return at that time, and perhaps not." She shook hands with Mortimer, and the tears were rolling down her cheeks as she bade him good bye. He had been standing up with his foot upon the runner of the sleigh as if to stop it when it should start, and he took his handkerchief and wiped his eyes, for the tears were gathering thick and fast. The sleigh went lightly over the snow, which, in some places, was seven feet thick. When they had traveled about a mile, Ira

said, "I know whom you love and who loves you. It is Mortimer Markland."

She replied, "I do not love you, and I am not your lawful wife."

"You are my wife in the eyes of the law," said he. "You said in the east that you would never be my wife, and I said that you would, and I have accomplished my end."

"I suppose that you are happy," said Elgie.

"I am, and you can be, too, if you only try," said Ira. She did not speak again on their way home. They reached Carlon Holland's at six o'clock in the evening. Carlon met them with surprise. "How does this come that you have brought Elgie with you to-day? You said that you was going to attend a dance at Summerton," said Carlon.

"Carlon, this is my wife," said Ira.

"I do not believe it," said Carlon. "Is it true, Elgie?"

"I will tell you all about it," said she, and Carlon helped her into the house, and introduced her to his wife, Jennie Holland. "Why, what is the matter of you, Elgie? You look like death," asked Carlon.

"You will know why I look like death, when I tell you what I have come through. Please give me a little brandy, if you have any," and Jennie prepared some and gave it to her. They placed her in a large rocking chair; she then related to them the whole story. Carlon said:

"Elgie, if I had known it, I could have saved you. I am proud to have you for a sister, but not

proud to have you the wife of a brother whom you despise. If you leave him I will not blame you, and if you remain with him, I will be a brother to you and Jennie will be a sister.

After resting several days Ira took her to her home on the prairie. Judge of her feelings when she found that the grand new house which Mrs. Markland had told her of, was only a small frame building containing a kitchen, a pantry, a bedroom, and a small sitting room, and they were only partly lathed. This dwelling was located beside a grove, and from this point the prairie extended for miles. She gazed upon the vast plain before her, and thought what a falsehood he had told her in regard to all things. Elgie soon desired to return to Carlon's, for in a few days she learned, as an eye witness, that Ira Holland was guilty of a base crime, in breaking the command of the Bible, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." This she kept to herself, for she knew that it would not be believed. Ira asked her to go to to the village with him, which she did. He left her at Dr. DeFoe's, while he attended to his business, and while there she learned all that she desired to know. She was surely under a dark cloud. The sky, if possible, was darker than ever before. The three weeks had rolled by, and Elgie told Carlon that she wished to return to Mr. Markland's, and she desired him to take her. Ira said if she was determined to go, he would take her. Carlon said he was willing to take her, but he thought that perhaps it would be better for Ira to accompany her. She had now made up her mind

that if she reached Mr. Markland's she would never return to Ira Holland. She bid Carlon and Jennie good by, and took a seat beside the man she utterly despised. When they had gone about half way to Mrs. Markland's, their sleigh broke down on the prairie. There happened to be a farmer passing by at that time, and Ira asked him to assist in fixing it. He said:

"Your lady had better go to my house, just behind that stack of hay, and remain until we get this repaired."

So Elgie started. It was up hill, and her feet would slip, and she would catch hold of the hazel bushes to help herself along. She finally saw the house that the stranger alluded to. She made an attempt to climb the fence, but was so weak she fell to the ground. She then made another attempt, and succeeded in reaching the door of the hovel. She knocked, and was told to come in. When she sat down by the fire she found that she was much colder than she had at first supposed she was. She warmed herself by the fire, and although they were poor they gave her a cup of tea, which was relished by Elgie. To find sympathy, even in a hovel, was riches to Elgie Holland that day. The lady said:

"I feel sorry for you that you have to travel in the cold when you are sick."

Elgie thanked her and said:

"We have to do a great many things in life that are unpleasant."

Just then the farmer came and said the gentleman was waiting. Thanking the lady for her

kindness she bid her good-day and again seated herself in the sleigh. That evening they reached Black Rock, and stopped at Mr. Malcolm's. During the night Elgie was taken very sick, and Ira called a doctor of bad reputation to attend her. At her request Ira returned home the second day, and Mr. Malcolm was to write to him and inform him how she was, and at the end of three weeks he was to return for her. As soon as Elgie found out the character of the doctor who was attending her, she dismissed him and called another.

After she got better she did not see how she was to make her escape, as she had only ten dollars in money, but she preferred death to life, and while the household was wrapped in slumber she slipped noiselessly down stairs and went out, going toward the river. She reached its banks and found a hole cut in the ice; her first thought was to drown herself, but she thought of the words of her mother: "Never take your own life, no matter what befalls you." She looked up at the sky and something seemed to whisper, "You will yet be rescued from your fate," and just then an arm was thrown around her by a stranger who had watched her descent to the river.

"Do not tell on me and I will return to the house," she said.

The stranger made a solemn promise that he would not tell, and she, in the unutterable misery of her despair, slipped back to her room. In entering she made a noise, and Mrs. Malcolm arose to see what was the matter. Elgie spoke and said:

"It is me; I have been up—that is all."

On the next morning Elgie had an opportunity to go to Mrs. Markland's. Before she left she saw the stranger who came to her at the river, told him why she was intending to drown herself, and begged of him to keep the secret. He replied:

"Lady, you need never fear; I will never divulge it. I have heard of your trouble."

She left for Mrs. Markland's. and upon reaching there found them very glad to see her, and Mr. Markland shook hands and said:

"You did come as you agreed to do, and I am glad."

The next day Mrs. Markland's niece came from the East to visit her aunt, and she asked Elgie if she would stay and keep house while she visited with her niece among her children. She replied that she would do so; she and Mortimer were left alone. Mortimer now told her that he was—innocently, however—the cause of all her trouble. He said:

"I intended to marry you when your school closed, if you proved to be the lady that I thought you to be, and this I told to my brother-in-law confidentially. So when Ira Holland arrived and said that you were engaged to him, James Darlington said that if you married me it would be for my money, and that it was your duty to marry the one you were engaged to. Their aim was to get you out of the way, and then my property would be secure."

She replied, "I am going to leave him before he returns. He will not be back for two weeks yet."

"Elgie, do you love me well enough to be my wife?" asked Mortimer.

"I do," she replied.

"And you say that you are going to leave Ira Holland?" he asked.

"I am."

"Then I will make you an offer. I will give you means to go to your aunt's, but do not let anyone know where you are going. You can obtain a divorce in six months, and I will give you money to pay your board, and in two months I will send you some more. At the end of that time I will dispose of my effects in this State, and come to you, and we will be lawfully married, then go to your mother's and take her with us to California," said Mortimer.

Elgie said, "I will agree to this, but Mortimer, you must remember that I will never marry you till I am free, and can be lawfully your wife."

"I do not think of any such thing," said he, "I honor you too much to ask you to be anything but a lawful wife."

"I will feel when I leave here, that I shall never see you again. Our letters will be intercepted, or the people with their foul lies, backed by Ira Holland, will turn you against me."

"Never; so help me God! I will fix up my business as fast as possible, and will then leave this section of the country forever. In the first place, I will watch that they do not get my letters," said he.

She continued, "But, I tell you, Mortimer, you may watch closely, and our letters will be

intercepted, and when we part at this prairie home, it will be forever."

He replied, "I think not. I never can believe it, Elgie. Be true to me, and I will be true to you."

"I will leave on the Tuesday before he returns," said she.

"I am sorry, Elgie, that I did not know this sooner. I loaned out one hundred dollars the day before you arrived at Black Rock. If I had known your intentions I would have kept it for you, but I will get some money for you before you leave," said Mortimer.

That evening Ira Holland arrived unexpected. Elgie soon informed him that she would not live with him again, and that their paths must now lay in opposite directions. He begged of her to return with him, but she replied, "Spend your days with your mistress." This was the first that Ira knew that Elgie was posted as to his actions. He turned deathly pale, but did not make any attempt at denial. He said:

"Elgie, if you leave me I will follow you and injure you to the extent of my power, even though I will have to lie to do it."

She replied: "The lying part will be no trouble to you."

While they were talking Frank Darlington came into the room and asked:

"Ira, is she going to live with you?"

Elgie answered and said: "No, Mr. Darlington, I am not."

While they were talking Mortimer had gone to

get the money he wished to give Elgie, for he knew that she must leave immediately, as her life, as well as his own, was in danger, for they were blaming him for the separation. She could not be prevailed upon to again live with Ira, so he left that evening, and she bid him farewell forever, intending to take the stage on Sabbath morning, but as it did not run on that day she was obliged to remain over Sabbath. She went into the parlor and told Mortimer she would stay there, as she would not have another interview with Ira should he return. All alone she sat thinking what was to become of her. She thought, "I am truly a wanderer. When I leave this dwelling I cannot count on anything but the sky above me, and the earth below me for a pillow upon which to lay my weary head." She seated herself on a low stool and composed these lines for her mother:

I have left thee, my dear mother;
I have bid a long farewell,
When I said good-by to brother,
Oh, could thou know my thoughts full well.
Hours of anguish I have spent;
A father's love I never knew;
Oh, I've had causes to repent
For bidding home a last adieu.
Trouble I have seen, dear mother,
Pen can't write, nor tongue can't tell.
Would to God I'd loved no other,
And with my mother could but dwell.
Tell my sister not to murmur,
Her troubles cannot equal mine;
Tell her not to mourn our sister,
Who was taken just in time.
If on earth we meet not ever,
And my lot be ever to roam,
And God's will is us to sever,
May we in heaven be welcome home.

When she had finished these lines, she took a pen and paper and wrote to her mother that she had parted from Ira Holland, that she was going to her aunt's in the Hoosier State, and that she would write as soon as she got to her destination. She then enclosed the lines she had composed and sealed the letter to mail at the first station at which she stopped on the road. She had just finished her letter when Mortimer stepped to the door and said: "Ira Holland is coming. If he attempts to enter your room defend yourself, and I will stand by you."

She said: "You forbid him to come into the parlor, and I do not think that he will attempt it."

Mortimer then returned to the sitting-room. When Ira entered the room he asked if he could see Elgie. He replied: "No; she does not wish to see you." He remained at Mrs. Markland's all day, and she stayed in the parlor. In the evening he concluded to go to his cousin's and remain all night. After he had gone Mortimer asked Elgie for her portmonnaie. He put fifty dollars in it, and handed it back to her. She then came out of the parlor and went into the sitting-room. There she found no intruders, and the evening was spent quietly. Mrs. Markland in the meantime had returned home. Next morning she asked her where she was going. Elgie replied: "I am going among civilized people, if I can find any. In this tribe I have found only two."

"And which are the civilized ones?" asked

Mrs. Markland. She replied: "I have said all that is necessary."

The next morning Mortimer and Jay carried her trunk to the gate. When the stage came in sight Elgie shook hands with Mrs. Markland, and said: "Good-bye. God will remember you for your unkind treatment of Elgie Holland, the homeless girl, and to whom you promised to be a mother."

Mrs. Markland was shedding tears, for her conscience smote her, and she said: "I wish you would tell me where you are going?" but she made no reply, her heart was too full. Mortimer offered his arm, and with Jay upon the other side of her, they conducted her safely to the stage. Mortimer said:

"Gentlemen, I ask you to take charge of this worthy lady, for she has a long journey to take alone. If you will please see to her and protect her from the cold, as she is not well, I shall be much obliged to you."

One of the gentlemen arose and said: "We will do so with pleasure." Mortimer and Jay then bid Elgie good-bye. The gentlemen wrapped the robe around Elgie to protect her from the cold. As the stage started she waved her hand and looked back, and Mortimer was waving his handkerchief in the air. All this time James Darlington was in the stage. He had gone to meet it, so as to witness Elgie's departure. When the stage came opposite James Darlington's house, she saw him get off and saw Ira Holland standing at the window watching her. She

thought that perhaps this was a ruse, as Ira had informed her he would follow her. Mortimer had advised her to change cars as soon as possible, and if he attempted to follow her he would lose all trace of her.

The snow was melting on the prairie and was forming ice. The stage was on runners, and at times it would slide off the road and stand at right angles with the horses; this impeded their progress and made traveling tedious. The reflection of the sun on the ice was a grand sight, and for miles it looked like a field of diamonds. The sun was now and then obscured by a cloud, and the prairie winds were most piercing. When they reached Dumberton she mailed her letter to her mother. The gong sounded for supper, and Elgie asked the driver how long it would be before she could continue her journey. He replied, "Half an hour." She seated herself at the table at the hotel, and the gentleman who had been so kind to her took a seat opposite. After supper she warmed herself by the grate fire until she was notified that the stage was waiting. She wrapped herself in her mantle, and the same friendly gentleman helped her into the stage. About 4 o'clock in the morning some person told the driver that if he attempted to cross the Blue river before daylight, he would land the passengers at the bottom of the chasm, which was forty feet deep. The driver replied, "I will take them across if I go to perdition. In a few moments he screamed out:

"Passengers, jump for your lives."

With that they all made a leap. The driv-

drove the horses up a steep embankment, and the stage turned bottom side up, and all of the trunks but two went to the bottom; Elgie's was one of the two. The driver told the passengers that they would have to walk to the hotel. Elgie did not know how she could walk so far, as she was faint and weak. The strange gentleman offered her his arm, and they all started for the hotel. It was so slippery that they had to take hold of the hazel bushes to keep from slipping or falling down. It was daylight when they reached the hotel. Elgie was shown into the sitting room, and as she discovered a lounge there she took possession of it. As she lay there meditating, she thought "How little the people of this world know what is going on. While the people in one portion are happy, in another portion of it they are miserable." She thanked the Lord she had found a friend in the person of the strange gentleman. "Perhaps the Lord has ordered that I should pass through this fiery ordeal to wean me from the world, and to fix my mind on things more pure. The promise is to all that come, and those who have worked in the vineyard one hour shall receive as much as those who have worked all day." As these thoughts passed through her mind she was at a loss to explain why she should have so much trouble, for she tried so hard to do right. She said to herself, "I do not understand theology enough to see my way clear. I will yet trust in Him who died upon the cross to save sinners such as I am; I believe he will never forsake or leave me."

The gong sounded for breakfast; she seated herself at the table with the rest of the passengers. After she had finished her meal, of which she had scarcely tasted, she asked for the proprietor; he came, and after stating to him that she wished to pay her bill, he informed her that her bill had been paid. She went to the strange gentleman and asked him if he had paid her bill. He replied that he had. She thanked him for his kindness, and offered to pay him. He said, "I will not receive it. You are welcome to it. You no doubt will need all the money you have. Now, lady, you are sick and in trouble, will you inform a stranger what the nature of your trouble is? If it is in my power, I will assist you."

She replied, "I thank you for your kindness, but it is not in your power to assist me in my trouble." She partly related to him what she had passed through, and that she was fleeing from the man who claimed her for his wife. When she had finished her story, the gentleman asked, "Why did you not shoot him and his accomplices? No law would have injured you."

She replied, "I knew I was in the lion's den, and I was trying to get out of it in the easiest way possible."

The stranger said, "Your looks tell me that you have passed through fiery trials. I thought that this was a civilized country, but your case is certainly one of barbarism. What is your destination?"

Elgie replied, "I am going to my aunt's, in the Hoosier State. What my fate will be

there, I not know. I dread everything before me."

It was 10 o'clock in the morning before the stage arrived, and the passengers were all anxious to continue their journey. When they reached the railroad the train was waiting. Elgie did not stop for supper, for she knew that she could not eat. The stranger had insisted that she must eat something, so he seated her in the car and went out to get his supper. In a few minutes a boy came in carrying a waiter, on which was a very nice lunch, with a cup of nice coffee, and biscuit and butter. He said, "This is for you," and handing her the waiter, he said, "I will come back after a little." She ate the biscuit and drank the coffee; the boy then returned for the waiter. Elgie asked how much she owed him. He answered that it was paid for. When the stranger returned to the car she thanked him for his kindness. He replied, "You are a thousand times welcome. I have a daughter, and I am doing for you what I would want a stranger to do for her, if she should ever meet a like fate." The conductor called out, "All aboard," and the iron horse started on its journey. When they reached the "Father of Waters," the ice hid it from view. 'Busses were crossing it at all points. Elgie took a seat, accompanied by her strange friend. When the 'bus first went upon the ice all was quiet, but in five minutes the ice was cracking, and the noise made sounded like the report of great guns. The passengers looked at one another in fear. They knew that at any moment they might all go to the

bottom of the river. The driver hurried the horses to reach the shore before the ice would give way, which it was liable to do at any moment. They got safely over, and in an hour after the ice broke loose and started down the river, carrying all before it. Elgie was thankful, for her mother's sake, that she got across safe, but for herself she did not care, for life had no pleasure for her. The stranger said to Elgie, "You were the only calm one in the 'bus."

"The rest have not, probably, passed through the storms of life as I have," said she.

They reached the station, where they took another train, and were soon rolling rapidly along. Elgie made a pillow of her shawl and lay down on the seat the rest of the way. When the whistle blew for the station of Vandalia, the stranger friend said:

"Now I will bid you good-bye. I hope that you may recover your health and spend many happy days in this life yet."

"Thank you, and if you ever meet another lone lady in this world as unfortunate as I, I hope you will again be a friend, and I hope you will ever think of me as one worthy of your kind attention."

He replied: "I will, and I am glad that it was in my power to do you a kindness."

When the cars stopped he assisted her off the car and said:

"I wish I could see you to the end of your journey, for you are not able to travel alone."

She went into the hotel, where she had to

remain over night. She refreshed herself with cold water, and sat down to rest. She had not long been in her room when the landlady came to her room and said:

"Excuse me for coming into your room uninvited. I noticed when you came in that you looked sick, and I thought it my duty to ascertain."

"Thank you. I am sick and worn out traveling," said Elgie.

"Is there anything I can do for you? If there is I will do it," said the landlady.

"I think that after I get my supper and a good night's rest I will feel better," she said.

The landlady then said: "I will place a small bell in your room, and if you should need anything during the night you can ring it and I will come, as my room is just over yours."

The gong sounded for supper, and Elgie went with the landlady to the dining-room and was seated at the table. She ate what was for her a hearty meal, and then returned to her room. There was a Bible on the stand, which she took up and opened. After reading a chapter she kneeled down and offered a prayer to her Heavenly Father, asking for protection through the night and to the end of her journey, that no evil might befall her. She then lay down and fell to sleep, though her night's rest was broken by persons passing by or to and fro at the hotel. But notwithstanding this she arose in the morning feeling very much refreshed and ate quite a hearty breakfast. Before she started again on her journey the landlady put up a lunch and gave it to her,

and she took the morning train for Vernville, where she arrived about 10 o'clock. She then had nineteen miles to go by stage before she would reach her aunt's. The roads were terribly muddy, and the stage at times would sink in the mud to the hubs, and the passengers were obliged several times to get out and lay down rails from the fences and walk on them. Elgie could not walk on them, though she tried to do so. She was placed in the stage, and the rest of them walked as far as a quarter of a mile at a time.

Her cousins were residing in Willis Grove, a small village, where she arrived at 10 o'clock that night, very much worn out, so much so that she could not sit up. Her cousins treated her very kindly, and were glad to see her. The next morning she desired to be taken to her aunt's, who resided in the country. The road led by a winding stream along which were high hills covered with evergreens. There were openings in the ice where one could see the water gurgling along, and pouring over minature falls. It sounded very lonely to Elgie as she listened to the rippling of the water. Presently her cousin, Linton Church, pointed out her aunt's dwelling, She thought, "Now I will have a true friend, my mother's sister, to pour out my trouble to." Elgie remembered how kind her aunt was when she visited at the hall, at the time of Mina's death. When the carriage drove up her aunt Hetty came out. She was much surprised to see Elgie, yet very glad, and gave her a kiss of welcome. "Why did you not write me you were coming?" and

almost in the same breath her auntie said, "Why, Elgie, you look like death."

"I am sick, Aunt, and I am worn out with trouble."

After a little time she explained to her aunt her misfortunes.

"You have come to a poor place, for I have trouble of my own. You had better lie down and try to compose yourself. Your nervous system is shattered," said her aunt. She lay down, and her aunt gave her a stimulant of brandy. She soon fell into a sound sleep, and slept until 6 o'clock in the evening. Her uncle had been absent since morning, and had not yet returned. Her aunt Hettie prepared her some nice toast and made her a cup of tea. She had just finished eating when her uncle came in. Her aunt said, "This is my niece, Elgie Howard." Her uncle Henry welcomed her to his home. Elgie said:

"Aunt Hettie, you do not know how pleasant it sounds to be called by my maiden name."

Her aunt replied, "You will never be called by any other by me."

When her uncle heard of her misfortune he sympathized with her and said, "Elgie, we are wealthy, and if your aunt is willing you can live with us, or when you recover your health you can teach school. I don't know how she will feel about it, for she and I have had trouble."

Elgie's health did not improve under her aunt's treatment, and she advised her to go to her mother. After a few days she wrote to Mortimer Markland of her arrival and intended departure on

the following week, and that she would write him when she arrived at her destination. Elgie's aunt was very close, while her uncle was very free-hearted. He offered to deed eighty acres of land to her, with her aunt Hettie's dower in it, but she would not accept of it, and said it belonged to his children. On Tuesday of the following week she started for home. She longed to reach the home that had once been a home of wretchedness to her through all the days of her childhood, and to once more rest her head in the arms of her mother, and then pass into the unknown world. When she left her aunt's she gave her ten dollars, as a present. Her uncle took her safely to the depot in the carriage, and when they arrived they found the train was two hours late. Her uncle bade her farewell, and she went into the parlor of the hotel and took a seat. How anxiously she listened for the whistle of the train that was to carry her home. She almost screamed out, "Home, I have none. I am a lone wanderer with no place to rest my head." She thought, "I will go to my mother's friend and mine, J. P. Rivers, of Wartell. I will then write my father and mother."

The train arrived and the conductor assisted her into the car. She again made a pillow of her shawl and lay down to rest. When the conductor came around to collect the fare he asked her if she was sick, and she said she was.

CHAPTER LXVI.

ELGIE RESCUES A LITTLE GIRL, AND REACHES HOME.

It was not long until a little girl of fifteen came into the car and took a seat behind Elgie. The little girl was crying, and she thought it was because she had just parted from some of her friends. When the conductor came around she found that the little girl had taken the wrong road. The conductor told her not to cry, that he would see that she got through all right. After he had collected the tickets he returned to the little girl. "Now," said he, "I will take you to Chicago, and you can stay at the hotel with me, then I will put you on the right train in the morning."

She replied, "I have no money to pay my way."

"Oh, I will pay that," said the conductor. Elgie listened until the conductor went into the next car; she then raised herself up and told the little girl to come to her seat. She then informed her of her danger, and told her to stick to her and she would put her on the right train before she left Chicago. "When the conductor comes around, tell him you have found a friend aboard the train whom you had not before discovered, and he will not trouble you anymore," said Elgie. The conductor soon came in, and was looking for the little girl, as her seat was vacated. He came her and said, "You have changed seats."

"Yes, sir, I have found a friend whom I did not know was on the train. She will take care of me," said the little girl.

He looked somewhat dashed, but said nothing in reply and did not trouble her any more. When they arrived in Chicago, Elgie bought a ticket for the little girl and put her on a train that would take her to her proper destination. She kissed Elgie good bye, and said, "How I thank you! I will never travel alone again." She then took a 'bus and crossed to the depot, where she could get a train for Wartell. In half an hour the train started. In the evening she took a sleeping car, completely tired out, and soon fell asleep. At 11 o'clock in the night the conductor informed her that they would be at Wartell in half an hour, and it seemed but a few moments to her before they had reached the place. When she left the train she took a 'bus for J. P. Rivers'. She rang the bell, and Mr. Rivers came to the door.

"How do you do, Mr. Rivers? Can you entertain Elgie Howard, who is homeless, with a night's lodging?"

"Certainly we can, Elgie. How do you do? step in," said Mr. Rivers. Mrs. Rivers had retired, but she got up, and kindly offered to get Elgie some refreshments. She thanked her, and as she was dusty from traveling, she said she would wash herself and retire.

"You look like death, Elgie; are you sick?" said Mr. Rivers.

"I am, Mr. Rivers, and I am broken down body and mind. If you will excuse me to-night, I will

tell you all about it in the morning. I will just say that I was forced to marry a man I did not want, and I have fled from him," she said.

She retired, and thanked her Heavenly Father that she had found a place to lay her weary head. She was so worn out that Morpheus was her ruler. In the morning she awoke feeling somewhat rested, but very weak. After breakfast she related her troubles to her friends, and Mr. Rivers said that she ought to have shot Ira Holland, and that she had done wisely in leaving him. She asked Mr. Rivers to procure a divorce, and he said he would do so as soon as possible. She then asked if she could remain with them until she could hear from her mother. "Certainly," said Mr. and Mrs. Rivers. That morning she wrote to her mother that she was in Wartell sick and worn out in body and mind, and that she longed to get to her childhood home and die, asking her mother to answer immediately. That afternoon Mr. Rivers told Elgie that a friend of his wanted a lady to come and remain with his wife for company and assist in the chamber work. Mr. Rivers thought it would be a good place for her, as she would need to see the doctor, and this place was convenient to the doctor's office. She liked the idea and went. The lady put her to doing housework in her weak condition. Elgie had got a stimulant from the doctor, and was going down street to tell Mr. Rivers of the work she had to do, when she saw her brother Wallace coming into town. She beckoned to him, and he came to her and exclaimed:

"Oh, my God! I did not know you; you are such a wreck," and he burst out crying.

She replied: "My father, Susan and you are to blame for this. Are you going to take me home with you? I can hardly stand on my feet, and I have to work."

Wallace replied: "I can not take you to-day, but I will send for you to-morrow," and with that he turned his steps homeward. Elgie burst out crying and said:

"My brother, who once loved me, cannot take his sick sister home without the consent of his wife."

While Wallace was in Wartell talking with Elgie Dr. Howard returned to the hall with her letter. When he opened it and read that she was in Wartell he said:

"I hope that Wallace will return without her. If he brings her home she will never enter the hall alive."

Mrs. Howard replied: "You will not harm a hair on her head."

"I will," he said. "She has married a man that I despise, and now has left him and come home to disgrace me."

When Wallace came home his father asked him if he had seen Elgie. He replied:

"Yes, I did see her."

"It is well that you did not bring her home with you, for if you had I would have killed her," said his father.

To this Wallace replied: "You would do no such thing, father; she will come to the Hall this

week. We have caused her trouble enough. She was forced to marry Ira Holland, and she left as soon as an opportunity offered. She is a perfect wreck."

All this time Mrs. Howard was walking the floor almost wild with grief. Dr. Howard then got James Darlington's letter and read it. He said:

"I see it now. There was foul play and I wish Elgie was here."

Elgie felt the next morning that she must reach home, for she could not keep up much longer. She sent word to Mr. Rivers to please tell the hack driver to call for her. She was ready when the hack came, and bidding the lady goodby, she stepped into the hack. It happened that the proprietor, an old friend of Elgie, was driving that day. He looked at her several times, before he recognized her. He said, "Elgie, I did not know you. I heard you were married."

"That is what they claim, but I am free again, all but the divorce," she said. She reached the Hall that afternoon. When she walked up the path she thought, "Three months ago I left the Hall with health, and bright hopes before me; I now return a perfect wreck." Her mother caught her in her arms, exclaiming:

"Thank God! My child, you have come!" She then led her to the sitting-room, where Dr. Howard was. He looked up, and said, "O, Elgie! Your father's pride, a perfect wreck!" He drew her to him, and taking her on his lap he fondly kissed her for the first time in many years.

"I am so glad that you did not come with Wallace," he said, "for if you had I might have done some terrible deed, for I was so enraged."

By this time Susan made her appearance, and to do justice to her, we must say she shook hands with Elgie, and kissed her, saying: "I am so glad that you have got home." After having reached her mother's roof once more, she gave way to her feelings, and soon retired. She had a raging fever, and Dr. Howard went for Dr. Duncan. He came at once, and was surprised to find her in such complete prostration, and said, "I cannot think it possible that it is Elgie Howard." She had no appetite, but Dr. Duncan told Mrs. Howard that whatever she asked for to eat should be given at once. Her mother asked her if she would not have a piece of toast prepared as she used to do for her when sick, and she replied she thought she could eat it. Mrs. Howard then went to the kitchen and asked Susan to show her which crock of milk she should take the cream from for Elgie. It was two o'clock in the afternoon. Susan replied, "There will be no milk disturbed for her. She can wait until the cows are milked this evening."

"I own a cow, and I will not go to the neighbors to beg milk for my almost dying child," said Mrs. Howard. She took the milk and made the toast for her, and Susan told Wallace that his mother had disturbed the cream, and that if she had asked her which crock to take from she would have told her. Wallace scolded his mother, who cried and said that as soon as Elgie was able to

work she would try to get a place to live. That day she overheard Susan telling Ardeela that it would be better for her if Elgie should die, for Wallace and Ardeela would get all of their father's property. "But," she said, "if Elgie lives, she will be the heir, as she is the favorite of both your father and mother."

After this conversation Ardeela came in, and said:

"Elgie, do not take any food excepting that which mother prepares for you, until you have recovered."

She asked to be propped up in bed, and then called for James Darlington's letter. Her father handed her the letter, and said, "This letter proves your statement, now that I know all."

With a trembling hand she took the letter from the envelope, and read:

"BLACK ROCK.

"DR. HOWARD:

"At the request of your daughter Elgie, I write to inform you that she was married to Ira Holland, of this State, but lately of the State in which you reside, at the residence of Mrs. Markland. Mr. Holland has a good reputation where he lives, and is considered an industrious young man. It may seem to you that a matter of very great importance has been consummated in a very short time; but from what I understand and can learn, it has been an affair of long standing, and all the marriage ceremony was conducted in decency and good order. Mr. Holland has about sixteen hundred dollars in real estate, besides per-

sonal property. Friends have all acted honorably, and happiness or unhappiness depends entirely upon your daughter's actions and conduct in the future. Yours, most truly,

JAMES DARLINGTON."

After perusing the letter she exclaimed, "What a black falsehood! He never wrote one word I told him to write, or that he said he had written." That same day her father received another letter which read as follows:

"DR. HOWARD:

"Your daughter Elgie has left Ira Holland, and has gone, God only knows where. You had better hunt her up. Ira Holland has taken steps to get a divorce.

"Respectfully,

FRANK DARLINGTON."

When she was able to sit up, Dr. W. Wallingford, an old friend of hers, called to see her. She told him how she was situated, and he said as soon as she was able he would like to have her come and remain with them, as his wife was alone and would like company, and when he left he said he would come for her in a week.

She improved very fast under her mother's care, and at the appointed time Dr. Wallingford arrived with the carriage. His wife was well acquainted with Elgie, and sympathized with her in her trouble.

Mrs. Howard then concluded to leave Wallace and his wife, and rented a house in Sewellen.

Spring now had come. The roses were in bloom, and the morning-glory blossomed luxuri-

antly. The sand-hill crane waded through the pond in all his majesty, paying no attention to the small waves that were rolling around him, nor the smaller birds, which flying through the air, would descend, and scream with fright, and disappear upon their pinions.

Elgie sat and reviewed the scene for hours. She thought how different the fowls of the air were from the human family. When they think that they are in danger, they can soar aloft, high in the air, and bid defiance to the larger birds. She looked around, and everything seemed a mockery to her feelings. She thought of the letters, and said to herself, "I will go to J. P. Rivers, Esq., to-morrow, and show him those letters."

When she handed him the letters, he took them and very carefully read them.

"Foul play," he exclaimed, and he then read aloud: "The friends have all acted honorably," etc. Why did he defend himself before he was accused? That shows guilt on the face of it." He then read, "Happiness or unhappiness depends entirely upon the conduct of your daughter in the future." Here Mr. Rivers laughed, saying, "He must think that Holland is a saint." After a few moments he said, "Elgie Howard, you are not his wife in the sight of God, but the laws of the land would hold you. I will .get a divorce for you as soon as possibte." She then handed him the other letter. He read it and said, "You certainly were in a den of lions, and you may thank the Lord that you have escaped

as well as you have. People with such cruel hearts as they must have, will murder." He advised her to keep up a good heart, that she would soon be free, and that he would drop a line when court opened. After that he wished to file her petition for divorce. He said:

"This is a hard fate for one who has been a good girl, and has come through the fiery trials of life as you have, under the tyrannical rule of your father."

Mrs. Howard moved to Sewellen. Dr. Wallingford told her that if she could not pay her rent, and if Dr. Howard would not assist her, he would do so himself. Dr. Howard, however, when his wife left the hall, concluded to go with her and Elgie. Ardeela was to come home whenever she desired. They had not been living in Sewellen more than two months when Ira Holland arrived. He tried to get an interview with Elgie, but in this he failed. Dr. Howard said in public: "If he comes to the house I will kill him." After failing to get an interview with Elgie Ira Holland did everything in his power to injure her, as he told her he would do if she left him. He told falsehood after falsehood, and said he left her, instead of her leaving him. Frank Darlington's letter came in advance of him, however, so that settled the matter. He remained in that vicinity for several months, and was in the same village where Elgie was. A gentleman with whom she had been slightly acquainted some years before, called upon her and invited her to take a ride. She declined, saying that she was not free from Holland.

and that she could not accept anyone's company until she was free by law. He insisted that she had a perfect right to take a carriage ride with a friend, so long as she never intended to live with him again. She still declined the invitation, and bidding her good morning he left. After he had gone she said to her mother:

"I believe that Holland sent that man after me and paid him to take me to him."

"You and I had the same thoughts," said her mother.

In half an hour there was another knock at the door. Elgie opened it, and there was the same gentleman. He had returned to urge her to gowith him for a ride. She then told him she wished him to leave the house and never enter it again. A few days after, they learned that Holland had employed this man to take her to him. After this she did not hear anything more of him for several weeks, so she concluded that he had left the place, and she ventured to go to the store. The merchant told her that Ira had been there not more than half an hour previous. After that she remained at home most of the time for a year, except when she would go and stay with Mrs. Wallingford.

She was again taken sick with bilious fever, and her mother desired her to have a doctor, but she said she would not take any medicine as she had no desire to live. Dr. Duncan had sold his practice to Dr. Ward, and moved to the town of Oakville. Mrs. Howard finally sent for Dr. Ward, who came, but Elgie would not take his medicine.

She told her mother that if she would give her cream of tartar she would take that, but if it failed to help her, she would have to give her up, as she would take nothing else. She had an old schoolmate who picked blackberries and brought them fresh to her every day, and these were all she ate. Her friends would call on her and go away shedding tears, saying, "I believe Elgie will die." Mrs. Howard watched over her, hoping that the crisis would pass, and that her child would be spared to take care of her mother in her last days. That night Elgie thought that she was going to die. She asked to be carried to the door, where she could once more look upon the moon and stars. Her father and mother gratified what they felt was perhaps the last wish of their child, and carried her to the door. She raised her eyes to heaven, and exclaimed, "How beautiful it is!" and then sank away. Her father felt her pulse, and said, "She is dying." They laid her carefully on the bed, and she remained unconscious for two hours. Her father again felt of her pulse, and said:

"Thank God, my child still lives. The crisis is passed;" and turning to Mrs. Howard, he said, "My dear wife, our child is saved."

She began to recover, though very slowly; but after having fully recovered from the effects of her sickness, her health was better than it had been for years. While her father prayed to God to save his child, after she had recovered and was again upon her feet he refused to get her the clothing she required. Dr. and Mrs. Wallingford

made her a present of a pair of shoes and a dress pattern, and her mother again applied herself to the avocation of weaving, so that they managed to buy their clothing that year. She paid twenty-five dollars on the rent, and Dr. Howard paid the balance and continually cast it up to her.

That week Wallace told his father he should not be able to pay for the farm, as Susan had kept hired help, and paying that and the doctor's bills, with other expenses, had prevented him from making the annual payment, while the year before he had poor crops. Dr. Wallingford told Elgie that with the exception of one time, there was nothing but laziness ailing Susan. He said, "I pitied Wallace; but some doctor would be employed, and I thought I might as well have the money as anyone else."

Mrs. Howard felt terribly about having to take the farm back, and told the doctor he need not expect she and Elgie to work as they had done in years past. He replied:

"I do not expect it, and I shall sell the farm as soon as I can possibly do so."

They then made arrangements to return, and Wallace was to occupy a part of the Hall until fall.

CHAPTER LXVII.

RETURN TO THE FARM—BREAD CAST UPON THE WATERS.

Mrs. Howard and Elgie were moved to the farm. In a few weeks after, Wallace was drafted

to defend his country, but he preferred the volunteer service, so his wife moved to Wartell, and Elgie assisted her mother in the housework and took in sewing. Ardeela did not like this, and secretly tried to prevent her from getting anything to do. Elgie had good friends who encouraged her to keep up, for there was a better day coming. She had written Mortimer Markland long before this, stating the truth in every particular, and thanking him for his kindness in rescuing her in the manner in which he did, and told him that she felt it her duty to fulfil the promise that she made to him, if he still desired it, but, as she felt now, she desired to marry no one. This letter never reached its destination; it was intercepted and returned to Elgie by some unknown person, and she never afterward heard from Mortimer Markland. She felt that she had always lived an honest life, and with a clear conscience she was able to keep up. The vile calumnies of Ira Holland soon died away, excepting as Susan Howard would occasionally try to bring it before the people. Elgie sought good society, never forgetting that right must prevail. She knew Susan Howard and James Darlington were professors of religion, and wished to be considered pillars of the church of which they were members, but she had read that the tares grew among the wheat and that at the harvest day the wheat would be gathered into the garner of righteousness and the tares would be cast into the fire. She would not allow them to be stumbling blocks to her feet, but would strive to enter in at the straight gate, by

the narrow path which would lead her to the kingdom of Heaven; though the path was rough and snares beset her on every side, and although she had to travel through this world alone and provide for herself, she would not give up. She knew that she was a sinner, but if she perished she would perish at Jesus' feet.

They had not been long on the farm, when Dr. Howard sold it without saying anything to Mrs. Howard about it. She was surprised when, one morning, he asked her to take a sleighride. He told her that he had sold the farm, and that she was to sign the deed. She was happy to do so, for she was anxious to get away. After selling the farm, he settled in Oakville, where their friend Dr. Duncan, resided. Arrangements were made for the removal of the family to their new home as soon as possible. Elgie had been engaged to do sewing for a family, and had been away from home some little time. One morning she complained of having sore throat, and called on the doctor in the village to get some medicine for it, and he told her she would have to return to her home immediately, if she ever expected to get there, as she was taking diphtheria in its worst form. She went home, and when she arrived there, was feeling quite ill. Her father asked her why she came home, and she told him. Mrs. Howard sent for Dr. DeMoin. As soon as he arrived, he gave her a remedy, and said that he would call again that evening. When he came in the evening, he found her in a very dangerous condition, and so told Mrs. Howard. All this

time her father had paid no attention to her, and he was angry, because they had called Dr. DeMoin. Mrs. Howard remained with Elgie all night. At four o'clock in the morning, she asked her mother to bring a light. She could not see, and her sufferings were terrible. Mrs. Howard brought the light. Erysipelas had set in, and her head and face were swollen to such an extent that her eyes were entirely hid. Mrs. Howard called her husband, and told him of his child's condition, and requested him to go for Dr. De Moin at once. He then came to the bed, and looked upon his suffering child, and exclaimed, "My God! What is it that you have not got to go through with?"

He started immediately for the doctor, and when they returned, Dr. De Moin gave no hope of her recovery. Dr. Howard acted like a wild man. He exclaimed:

"Oh, cannot she be saved, doctor? I cannot give her up."

Mrs. Howard knelt silently down, and prayed:

"Father in Heaven, if it is thy will, spare my child. If it is not thy will to spare her, claim her as thine own in the kingdom of heaven."

Dr. De Moin remained till morning, and watched his patient closely. The next day at noon, she began to again feel more easy, and the doctor departed with brighter hopes of her again being spared to recover. Slowly his hopes were realized, and gradually she grew stronger. When she was able to sit up in bed, her father found a nubia in the parlor. He brought it out to Elgie,

and asked her if that was the way she spent the money. She replied, "It was something I very much needed to wear around my head."

"Well," he said, "you had better save your money to pay your funeral expenses, for I will not pay them for you."

"I shall not expect you to pay them," she said. "As the outside world have given me means to support myself by industry, so they will, perhaps, kindly defray the expenses necessary to convey the remains of the unfortunate Elgie Howard to their last resting place, and especially when they know she has no father."

In the course of two weeks she was able to be about the house. She received a letter from the family for whom she had been serving, saying that they wished her to return as soon as she was able, and enclosed money to pay traveling expenses.

As soon as her father knew that she had been sent for, he commanded her to go. Mrs. Howard told him she was not able to do so, but it was of no use. He said if she did not obey him she must leave the house.

She went, and was confined to her bed one week before she was able to sew, but she did not let her mother know it. With all her trouble she kept a smiling face before the public, and would often pass a joke. She was asked how she could keep up her spirits. She replied:

"I take a peep out from under the cloud once in a while."

It was in this village that she again heard of Ira

Holland. She met a gentleman who told her that Ira had entered the army, this gentleman being captain of the company to which Ira belonged. He said that his conduct while in the army was such that he had been discharged from the service.

She inquired if Ira was married. The gentleman replied:

"He has been married, but his wife left him."

"What kind of a lady was his wife?" asked Elgie.

He replied, "I understand that she was a very fine lady. She should get down on her knees and thank her Heavenly Father for her escape."

"What was her name?" asked Elgie.

"I do not remember. I know that the family did not blame her, with the exception of one brother, and he takes Ira Holland's part," said the gentleman.

"I will now inform you that I am the sensible lady who fled from Ira Holland."

The Captain took her by the arm and said, "Can it be possible?"

"It is but too true," said Elgie.

He took his departure, and in four weeks Elgie returned to the hall.

Mrs. Howard and her went to visit some friends who lived eight miles from the hall. They went in a private carriage, and the day was pleasant. There was a beautiful lake called Lake of the Isle, on the east side of which their friends lived. Having no compass they lost their way, and drove to the west side of the lake. As they were driving through a piece of timber, Elgie noticed an

old log cabin, and looking through the fence was Freddy Douning. She stopped the carriage, and Freddy was over the fence in a minute, and throwing his arms about her neck, he showered kisses upon her. She said to him:

"Freddy, I thought you were out at Pike's Peak."

"O, no; we went only part way. Pa is dying in that log cabin, and we are all starving to death."

They soon left the carriage, and Freddy took hold of Elgie's hand, and led the way to the door. Mrs. Douning screamed, "O, thank God you have come." Mr. Douning reached forth his withered hand, and exclaimed, "Elgie Howard, did God direct you here?"

"I believe he did," said Elgie.

He then said, "Elgie, our wealth is all gone. I am on the brink of the grave, and we are starving. There is not a crumb of bread within these walls; one candle to flicker out is all we have."

She drew two dollars and a half from her pocket, and laid it on Mr. Douning's hand, and said, "You remembered me when I attended school, and was sick. You cast your bread upon the waters. Now it has returned to you after many days." Mrs. Howard then gave them one dollar and a half. Mr. Douning said with tears in his eyes, "Ten thousand thanks, Mrs. and Elgie Howard. If I never reach heaven, I hope you will."

Elgie told them that she would send them some provisions, and that she would have the doctor come and alleviate his suffering, for she knew that

he could not live. With sad feelings she and her mother left the cabin. Elgie thought, "What a change a few long months have brought." When they drove along the shore of the lake, and saw the waves rolling along so quietly, moved only by the gentle breeze, the wild duck swimming in the beautiful water, a snipe now and then descending and dipping its bill, and then soaring aloft, and here and there a tiny boat or skiff, filled with urchins plying the oars, they said, "What a comparison between this and the scene we have just left at the log cabin in the woods."

When they returned home, Elgie told her father of Mr. Douning's pitiful case. She knew that she could get him interested in the case, as his sympathies always went with strangers. Dr. Howard headed the list with flour, and raised provisions among the neighbors to supply Mr. Douning's family for weeks. Elgie asked Dr. Duncan to accompany her father to Mr. Douning's, and give him a remedy to relieve his cough. They loaded up their provisions and delivered them. The doctor attended Mr. Douning until the time of his death, which was but a few weeks. Many thanks went up from that log cabin in the woods, for the timely help which its occupants had received.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

REMOVAL TO OAKVILLE—ELGIE LEARNS THE MILLINERY TRADE.

When the time to remove to Oakville arrived sad were the feelings of Mrs. Howard, Elgie, and Ardeela. It was a sad trial for Mrs. Howard to leave the home she had occupied for thirty years, and see it pass into the hands of strangers. Although many hours of sadness had been spent beneath the roof of the Hall, yet there were many associations which they were loth to give up and leave forever, and trust to Dr. Howard for support. The neighbors gathered around them to bid farewell. Lida Young called to pay her respects to the Howard family, and when she shook hands with Elgie she said:

"Elgie, I never liked you, but I can say that you never was a person to injure another, but generally spoke well of them."

Elgie replied:

"I thank you for your compliment. You could not have paid me a greater honor."

Their friends escorted them to the depot, and that evening they arrived at their new home. When Elgie arose next morning the sun was rising in the eastern horizon, and she stepped into the back yard and looked around. All was strange to her, and yet it was a romantic sight. The village lay in the valley, and was surrounded by hills, which were covered with evergreen trees. Tecumseh creek flowed through the village in two

branches, and upon their banks grew the weeping willow; large springs poured their waters down over the rocks, and foamed and fretted as they descended to the earth, and flowed gently along until they were lost in Tecumseh creek.

After everything was settled in the house, their father told Ardeela and Elgie that they would be obliged to work and clothe themselves. He would give them ten dollars a year and that was all. He said that they could do the housework for their board. Elgie then asked Ardeela to go in partnership with her in sewing. This Ardeela declined to do, and she tried to prevent Elgie from getting work, just as she had done when they were in their old home. But she had her friends and they employed her.

Elgie did most of the housework, and would then sit up till 12 o'clock and do her sewing; but Ardeela was ever finding fault with her.

Jane Wallace, she who had been Mrs. Howard's old friend, was a widow. She, with her two daughters, resided in Oakville, and of course she and Mrs. Howard renewed their friendship. Ardeela never ceased to speak ill of her sister whereever she went, and there were those who were ever ready to come and tell her of it, and many were the nights she cried herself to sleep. Elgie felt that she was honest to a cent. She could get credit wherever she asked for it. Dr. Duncan and wife were her friends in the new home, as well as they had been in the home of her childhood, and why her sister should feel so bitter toward her was a mystery which she could not explain. She

divided her money in such a way as to clothe herself and mother, and she even sometimes remembered her unnatural sister with a present. But Ardeela and her father made her home quite unpleasant by torturing her. After Wallace came from the army he and Susan made a visit home. While there they tried hard to sow seeds that would injure Elgie in the eyes of the people, but her noble mother stood by her, and told her never to give up, but to kneel by the throne of grace and ask her Heavenly Father to support her.

She concluded at last to learn the millinery trade, and told her father what she intended to do. He replied, "I hope you will fail if you make the attempt." She then wrote to Wartell to a lady to whom she had spoken about learning the trade. She received an answer that they would be glad to have her come, and that she could board with them. On the morning that she started her father said that she would spend her money to learn, and at the end of the week she would be home again. Her mother kissed her good-bye, and told her to keep up good courage.

When she arrived at Wartell, what was her surprise to find that the lady with whom she had engaged to learn her trade had sold out her store. She was so disheartened that she sat down and cried, "I will not give up. I will look for some other place." She walked into a millinery store, and asked the lady if she wished any one to learn the trade with her. She replied, "I do." She then informed her of her disappointment.

"I can get you a boarding house, and you can

sew for your board," said the lady. The matter was settled at once. In six weeks she had the trade complete, and she was then put into the store to wait on customers. After a few weeks she finished the sewing, and was then minus a place to board. Mrs. Burrous said she was sorry to lose her, but that she had the trade learned, and advised her to start in business for herself. She then started home comparatively happy, with the exception of one thought. She had written to her father to know if she might go in debt for a carpet on his account. He, however, looked upon her proposition more favorably than she had anticipated, and told her she could get the carpet. She did so, but paid ten cents more on a yard than he had given her permission to pay.

When Ardeela found out that Elgie had run her father in debt she was terribly angry. She said it was a thing she never was allowed to do, and she was the elder. Her father then began to abuse her shamefully, and told her he never would pay for the carpet. After he had exhausted his abuse he looked at the carpet and said that it was beautiful, and walking into the yard he called her out, and said, "Elgie, dear, has Ardeela got over her being indignant about your getting that carpet? You need not pay any attention to what she says; the carpet is a beautiful one, and I will pay for it."

She smiled, and said, "I thought you would, father."

Shortly after she returned home she received a letter from Mrs. Carlon, a cousin of her father's, who lived at the city of P——, who wrote to

Elgie, stating that if she would come to the city she would get her a good situation in a millinery establishment. She immediately accepted the offer and prepared to start. On the morning she left, Mrs. Howard gave her that advice which only a true mother can give. She said, "You know that I feel sorry to see you go, but it is for the best. Your father speaks the truth when he says, 'The life goes out of the house as the echo of Elgie's footsteps dies away in the distance.' But I know there is no other way for you to do. Your life is worn out as on a hackel in this house. Ardeela's hatred toward you is on the increase. I will be lonely, but you must write me often, and I will pray for your success."

She kissed her mother good-bye, and started for the train. She arrived safely at the city of P——, where she was met at the depot by Mr. Carlon, and received the kindest treatment from all the family. The next day Mrs. Carlon went to obtain a situation for her as superintendent of a millinery establishment, but she was one day too late. Elgie said, "Oh, well, I won't give up yet!"

Guy Carlon came home that evening and told her he had a situation for her in a velvet hat establishment, and he could go with her to and from her work every day. Guy was an artist, and his office was in the same building with the hat store. Guy, like Elgie, had left his companion, and been divorced, and had passed through the storms of life, and knew well how to sympathize with her. The following morning she and Guy started across the long wire bridge that was suspended across the

river, and reaching the place of business, he introduced her to the proprietors of the hat establishment. She was employed and made assistant forelady, and also assisted in trimming hats. She was anxious to do all she could, and to save money enough of her own to open an establishment for herself, without borrowing much capital. She sewed in the evening to pay for her board, and liked her place very much, but found it very cold crossing the river three times a day.

A lady who came down the river in search of a first class milliner, called at the store where Mrs. Carlon had recommended Elgie, and she sent the lady to Mrs. Carlon's at once. When the door bell rang, they were all seated at the table. The servant girl answered the bell, and told Elgie that there was a lady in the parlor who wished to see her. She went to the parlor, and the lady introduced herself as Miss Wild, and said that she was from Greenville, sixty miles up the river, and that she wished Elgie to take charge of their establishment. They offered to pay her seven dollars a week with board and washing, and would also pay her traveling expenses to and from the city. When she returned to the table she told them that she had accepted the offer the lady made to her, and would leave them in a few days. They were very sorry to have her leave, but Mrs. Carlon said she knew it was best. Henry said he would take her to the boat in a carriage, and Guy said he would meet her at the river, and bid her good-by. Mrs. Carlon said:

"Miss Jolly, you had better remain with us. We will be lonely without you."

At the appointed time Henry Carlon arrived with the carriage, and when Elgie bade them all good-by, she but just began to realize how lonely it would be to again go among strangers. She seated herself in the carriage, and they were soon at the river, which was crowded with steamers. Henry assisted her aboard the boat Chieftain, and wishing her success, he bade her adieu. Guy had gone aboard the steamer Bennett, thinking that was the boat that Elgie was going on, and after waiting an hour he concluded that perhaps she had been persuaded to give up going. As he stepped from the boat, the Chieftain was starting up the river. Elgie was out on deck, wondering why Guy had not come as agreed. He looked toward the boat as it was steaming out from the dock, and seeing her on deck, waved his handkerchief. This attracted her attention, and she waved hers in return. Though she, as well as Guy, was disappointed, yet she felt gratified to know that he had kept his promise.

In an hour the rain was pouring down in sheets; the sky was black; the lightning flashed, and the thunder rolled loud and long in the mysterious space above. The Chieftain went plowing through the waves, seemingly as quiet as if all was calm. Evening came upon them, and while they were seated at the supper table the steamer began to rock. Elgie left the table, and went on deck for a few moments. The storm was raging, and the

waves lashing one another were rolling high against the sides of the vessel, and not a star was to be seen.

CHAPTER LXIX.

ELGIE HOWARD ALMOST DROWNED—SHE VISITS HOME.

She returned to the cabin. She had often heard of storms on the river, but this was her first experience. She took a seat in the cabin, and a lady introduced herself to her as Mrs. Doctor Hues, of Greenville, and asked if she was the lady that Mr. Wild was expecting.

Elgie replied, "I am; my name is Howard."

Mrs. Hues said that they were friends of the Wild family, and that her husband was their family physician. She then informed Mrs. Hues that she was the daughter of Doctor Howard, of Onoco. Mrs. Hues excused herself, and shortly after returned with her husband whom she introduced to Elgie. They sat down and began a conversation. They said:

"Miss Howard, while you remain in Greenville, we wish you to feel that at any time you may wish to come to our house, you will be as welcome as in your own home with your mother. We have no doubt but that you will get lonely and homesick among strangers, but you can always look to us as friends."

She replied: "Thank you. I appreciate your kindness, and though I am a stranger, I hope I may prove worthy of your trust and confidence."

Doctor Hues then walked to the other end of the cabin. At 9 o'clock the captain came down to the cabin and informed the passengers that they should not retire, as the vessel was in danger. The whistle of passing steamers could be heard, but scarcely a glimmer of light could be seen. They plunged along, however, and finally they reached Greenville at 4 o'clock in the morning, the darkest hour before daylight. There were several steamers ready to start for the city. The Chieftain could not reach the shore without running a great risk, as the water was so very high. They pulled up alongside of one of the steamers nearest the shore, and laying a gang-plank from the Chieftain to the steamer Allen, and one from the Allen to the shore, the passengers of the Chieftain were enabled to reach terra-firma. The clerk of the boat, thinking that Elgie was a resident of Greenville, and understood how the passengers were leaving the boat, took her by the hand, and instead of leading her as he supposed to the gang-plank, she stepped aside, and in a moment was in the water below. Mrs. Hues screamed:

"Miss Howard is overboard! Save her! O, save her!"

There was a gentleman on shore who had but one arm, and a gentleman on the Allen. They both took off their boots and coats and plunged into the water, to save her if possible. Mr. Andrews, the man with but one arm, caught her as

she came to the surface the second time, and was passing under the Allen just as the wheels were beginning to turn. Elgie had grasped Mr. Andrews as only a drowning person can. He screamed for help, and Mr. Benjamin, the gentleman who had jumped from the steamer Allen, swam to their timely assistance and rescued them, taking them both ashore. After a time Elgie was restored to consciousness. Dr. Hues and another gentleman, with Mrs. Hues as their guide, carried her to the Wild mansion, which was but two squares distant. Mrs. Hues rang the bell and Mr. Wild answered it. He exclaimed:

"Good heavens! Have you brought me a corpse?"

Dr. Hues replied:

"Not quite."

They carried her into the house, and Dr. Hues called for woolen blankets. They wrapped Elgie in these and gave her some brandy, and then put her in bed. The next morning she was able to sit up. Her back pained her, and it was injured by the fall on the water. The captain of the boat said it was almost a miracle that she was rescued. The two gentlemen who rescued her called the next day and showed her the prints of her fingers on their arms, which she had made in clinging to them. She thanked them, and told them that at any time she could ever during her life reward them, she was ready to do any favor they could ask her to do. They replied:

"We have done no more than we would wish others to do by us under like circumstances."

The tears came into Mr. Anderson's eyes as he said:

"Miss Howard, you little know how nearly you lost your life, and how would that mother have felt to know that you were drowned?"

That day she wrote her mother of her narrow escape from drowning. Her mother answered that she had dreamed of the accident just at the time it occurred, but it was in another river.

Elgie recovered rapidly under the kind treatment she received, and in a few days she was able to enter the store. She liked her situation, and they were well pleased with her. Elgie was often amused at the colored people who were among their customers. They would say:

"Missy, I'se very particular 'bout de cullah ob my hat. I want it to suit 'plection ezactly."

Elgie would smile and say:

"Well, that's rather difficult."

After she had remained several weeks, giving entire satisfaction to her employers, she was stricken down with a sort of cholera, to which the inhabitants of that section of the country were subject. Dr. Hues did everything in his power to check the disease, and his wife was very kind to her, as were also their neighbors. One morning the doctor came and told her that she would be obliged to leave, and she had better return to the city, as she could not be cured there. The disease had become an epidemic, and there were four to five funerals a day passing the store. She heard Dr. Hues telling Mrs. Wild that she would have to leave. Mrs. Wild said:

"Can you not cure the disease? We do not want to part with her."

But Dr. Hues told her that she had better get ready and be taken to the boat the next day, if she was possibly able to do so. When the time came for Elgie to leave, they made her several nice presents, and said that they wished she would stay and move with them to the Quaker City in the spring. The captain of the boat gave Elgie a free pass down the river because of the accident which she had in coming up. When she returned to her friends they were rejoiced to see her. In two weeks she had recovered, and told her friends that she would go down the Ohio river, and visit a cousin of her mother's, and Mr. Carol Willson's second wife, whose maiden name was Rachel Boak. Guy Carlon accompanied her to the boat, and before she left she promised that she would visit them the next spring in company with her mother. She bid Guy good bye, the whistle blew, and the boat started down the river.

It was a pleasant day for that time of the year, and Elgie took a seat on deck. The hills along the shore looked quite romantic, and Elgie thought as she sat gazing into the water, "The cloud has followed me closely. I almost lost my life, but yet God has seen fit to spare me." She thought how surprised Carol Willson would be to see her, as they were not expecting her for some time.

When the boat landed it was dusk, and she arrived at Carol Willson's at 7 o'clock in the evening. She rapped on the door and it was opened by Charles Marks, Carol Willson's adopted son.

Rachel met her with tears in her eyes, and said:

"I am so glad you came."

Elgie asked, "Where is Mr. Willson?"

She replied, "He is dead. The day before he died he said, 'I wish I could see Elgie Howard. She is so much like her mother, and I would like to visit with her.'"

Elgie felt sad, for she thought him so kind when she visited there before.

She made arrangements to start a millinery store in that town in the spring, but intended to make a visit home first.

The scenery in that part of the State (which was once a part of the Old Dominion) was magnificent. The lofty hills were covered with evergreens. Down in the valley there was an oil-well which had taken fire. The blaze rose high in the air, and threw its light down the valley for miles, and then at times almost disappeared in the earth. She would look at the burning well, and made the remark that she thought it was emblematical of the Biblical description of Hades.

This well had been burning for many months. They had tried to quench the blaze, but without success. "Truly the mysteries of God are past finding out," she said to herself.

The next day she crossed the river, and took the cars for Oakville. When she arrived at home her father, for once, was rejoiced to see her return. As a matter of course, she was welcomed by her mother, though Ardeela scarcely noticed her, except to slur her, saying:

"You are father and mother's angel. It is a

good thing you have returned, for they will be happy now."

Elgie made no reply. She remained at home for some weeks, and told them, she would clean house for her mother before she left, and insisted on her mother returning with her to visit the home of her childhood, as she had not seen that region of country for more than thirty years.

Her mother finally decided to go with her. Elgie then asked her father to buy her mother a new dress to travel in. He replied:

"I will do no such thing. If you want her to have a new dress, buy it yourself."

Elgie replied, "I will tell the friends how kind you are to your wife," and returned to her work.

In a few minntes her father followed her, and patting her on the shoulder, said:

"Will you be able to go down street after dinner?"

She replied that she would. He told her not to let her mother know anything about it. When she was ready to go, he said, "I will accompany you."

They went to the store, and Elgie selected a traveling dress. He then told her to select a French merino and trimming for it. He sent the goods home with Elgie, and Mrs. Howard was very much surprised, and thought it could not be possible. When Dr. Howard arrived, his wife thanked him very kindly for the presents. He said:

"You need not thank me, but thank your or-

derly sergeant," meaning Elgie, and he laughed as he said it.

Lewis Howard had died some two years previous. Before his death, which took place very suddenly, knowing that he had wronged his wife, he told his sons to bring their mother home to live with them, as he wished to see her before he bade adieu to this earthly sphere. She did not arrive in time, and his spirit had taken its flight to the unknown world, to all appearance without his "lamp trimmed and burning."

Elgie, through her honesty, was not afraid to ask for the loan of money to open the store. Mr. McClure told her that she could have five hundred dollars if she wished it, but a few days afterward he met with a loss of several thousands of dollars, and could not let her have the money that he had promised her. But he signed a note with her and told her to borrow what she needed. She borrowed one hundred dollars, and then with her mother started for the old home. They arrived at the river which Mrs. Howard had not seen for thirty years. Silently she gazed upon the stream, and at last she said, "Oh, what a change." The large steamers traveling down the stream were so different from the ones that made their appearance and home on the river thirty years before. When they stepped upon the boat to cross the river, Mrs. Howard wept, and said: "How changed! How changed from the days of my childhood!"

They landed safe, and it was not many hours before they reached the dwelling of Carol Willson. His brother Loren was partially insane, caused by

the disappointment of Ada Collens not becoming his wife. Mrs. Howard and her cousin, Mrs. Carol Willson, lived over old times. Charlie Marks, his wife, and Elgie listened to the stories of their younger days, and to the many anecdotes that occurred in company with Carol Willson. Mrs. Willson said:

"Julia, if you could only have come before Carol died, how happy he would have been."

They spent the time pleasantly, while at the same time there were many sad things brought to their minds. Mrs. Howard then visited the grave of her father, Judge Collens, where he had been sleeping for nearly forty years. God alone knew her thoughts as she stood upon the spot where she and her father had been so many times before, and where he had requested her to see that he should be laid to rest. There was a small stone-wall built around the grave in the forest, and after turning to take a last look upon the grave that held the dust of her once loved father, she left with an almost broken heart.

They again started on their journey, and Elgie found that there were two millinery stores opened in the town where she had intended to start in business, and that it would not be worth while to open one there. She then had an offer of ten dollars a week to superintend a large millinery store in Burlington, which she at once accepted. Henry Burr, who had formerly lived with Judge Collens, resided in Burlington. Elgie's mother told her that if it was suitable she had better make her home with Henry Burr, and that she would

call on them before she left for home, and make arrangements to that effect if possible. They visited Lewis Howard's family, and Vina asked her sister-in-law, Mrs. Howard, if she thought that they would ever meet again in this world. She replied:

"It is hard to tell, Vina, and it is hard to tell where we will end our days. I hope to end my days with Elgie."

Vina replied: "I hope to end my last days with Claren, my youngest son."

Claren told his aunt Julia and cousin Elgie that he had to borrow clothes to attend his father's funeral as he had not a suit of clothes to his back, although his father was rich. His father had worked Claren almost to death. Julia said that Claren's father was just like his brother, Doctor Howard, and that they were called only eccentric, but she could not see it. The farewells were spoken, and they left for the city of P——, where they were gladly welcomed by the Carlon family. Mrs. Howard enjoyed her visit greatly, and was happy in the thought that she had once more seen her childhood home. After a few days she left for Oakville, and Elgie remained until she should receive a letter from Mr. A. Harcourt, stating that the store was ready to open. Mr. Harcourt had gone to the Quaker city to purchase goods, and in two weeks Elgie received notice that the store was ready. She bid the Carlons good-bye, and Guy accompanied her to the depot. It was not long before the train was traveling along the bank of the river, and she reached her destination in a

few hours. She was obliged to board at the hotel for a few days, as Mr. Burr was sick. At the end of two weeks he had so far recovered that she was received as a boarder. Mr. and Mrs. Burr would often remark, "How much Elgie is like her mother was at her age; a regular Julia Collens."

Lizzie Burr, their daughter, had not been idle. She had told Mr. Mellville, a nephew of hers by marriage, and a widower with two children, that Elgie Howard was boarding with them, and she invited him to call on her. This, of course, was kept from Elgie. She and Lizzie were were sitting in the parlor up stairs when they heard footsteps in the hall below. Lizzie said:

"That is Mark Mellville, a nephew of mine. He is a widower."

Just then Mr. Mellville stepped into the parlor. Lizzie introduced Elgie and Mr. Mellville, and he took a seat on the lounge, and was soon engaged in conversation. Elgie had received a letter from her mother, and also one from a gentleman in the city of P., which she was engaged in answering that afternoon. Both letters were lying on the stand, and Mr. Mellville jokingly said:

"Miss Howard, have you been writing home or to your beau?"

She replied, laughing, that she had been doing both. That evening was spent pleasantly, and when he left he asked for permission to call again.

Elgie liked her position in the store very much, and the proprietors were pleased with her. The next time Mr. Mellville called, he asked Elgie for the privilege of waiting on her. She told him

she would consider the matter, and that on Saturday night she would give him her history, and if he then desired to wait on her it would be all right, and if he thought otherwise it would be the same. He came according to promise, and she gave him a full history of her misfortunes. He listened attentively, and replied, "I think none the less of you for having been obliged to pass through the trials of life;" and then gave her a history of himself. He said he had traveled the paths of trouble, and was glad to find some one that was capable of sympathizing with him. He spoke of his children being homeless and depending upon relatives for a home; he said that he had provided money to clothe them, but he did not know how they fared otherwise. To this Elgie replied:

"I have had many opportunities to become a step-mother, but I always said that it was a position that I did not wish to fill."

He replied, "If you will make up your mind to become Mrs. Mellville, my children would always honor you."

"I have always found that outsiders will make trouble between a step-mother and step-children, and it is my firm belief that a child owes more to a kind step-mother or step-father than to its natural parents. The affections of a step-mother are produced by the associations with the child, and that we love a father is no proof that we can love his child, or children who may have inherited a disposition disagreeable in the extreme, from their father or mother," said she.

Mr. Mellville then said, "I admit that a loving disposition in a child will cause it to be loved, not only by a step-parent, but by all it may come in contact with; and if I am kind to a child, I want it reciprocated. If you will become my wife, I will give the children into your hands, and will never step between you and them, further than to make them respect and obey you. On the other hand, if you do not wish to take the children, we can clothe them and leave them where they are. But I would prefer to have Zalia; Edwin, being a boy, can go through life himself, with little care from us."

Elgie said, "Mr. Mellville, if I take one I will take both; I will not make fish of the one and flesh of the other; I will take them as my own children, and try to make them useful ornaments in society."

CHAPTER LXX.

ELGIE HOWARD'S SECOND MARRIAGE—THE DEATH OF DR. HOWARD.

Elgie made up her mind to become Mrs. Mellville, and in the presence of a few invited guests, at the residence of Mr. Burr, she was pronounced the wife of another. Mr. Mellville had married Mr. Burr's grand-daughter (whom he had brought up as his own daughter), for his first wife, and now he had married the granddaughter of Judge

Collens, with whom Mr. Burr had made his home fifty years before, when a poor boy; and Elgie's mother attended the wedding. This was truly a strange coincidence.

Elgie then wrote her mother that she was married, and that they would be home on a visit as soon as the millinery season was over, and that they intended to move to the capital of a western State.

At the time appointed they arrived. Dr. and Mrs. Howard were both much pleased with Mr. Mellville, but felt terribly about their daughter going west. Mr. Mellville promised to bring her back if she lost her health. She told her mother she should not worry; that if her father mistreated her, she could now provide a home for her, in which she would be most welcome. Her mother replied:

"I will remain as long as I can, and when I can endure it no longer, I will come to you."

She could scarcely part with Elgie, but she knew it was best.

They arrived safely at their new home, where they found Zalia playing jack-stones on the side-walk in front of her uncle's house, very poorly clad. Elgie had sent material to have her nicely dressed, but she did not have it on.

Mr. Mellville introduced her to her new mother, and throwing her arms around her neck, she kissed her. In a short time Edwin arrived with his uncle. He shook hands with his new mother and kissed her. His uncle said:

"You are welcome to your boy."

Mrs. Mellville found that the children had been sadly neglected, both being without suitable clothing, even for home wear. Her first step then was to clothe the children.

Soon after her arrival west she was taken sick, and with pillows around her to prop her up, she cut out and made their clothes.

One disease followed another for eight long months. Dr. Howard then told his wife to write to Elgie, and have her come home and bring the children with her, and her husband could follow as soon as he felt that he could leave.

When Elgie and her husband were at home visiting, Dr. Howard told Mr. Melville that Elgie had but one fault, and that was she was inclined to be extravagant. When the doctor sent for them to come home, Mr. Mellville replied:

"We will come. Elgie has become so saving that she has starved a mouse to death. So I know you can receive her now, father."

Mr. Mellville was fond of joking, and knew the doctor would laugh when he read this.

Mrs. Mellville had formed some very pleasant acquaintances, from whom she dreaded to separate, but she longed to see her mother, and it was not long before they returned to Oakville, but Mrs. Mellville's health was gone. Mrs. Howard and the doctor were rejoiced to see her home once more. Mr. Mellville then left for Grove City, situated on Lun Lake. Elgie Howard had heard of the beauty of this place, and had often while at work in the hay field expressed a desire to reside there. Mr. Mellville was very much pleased

with the city, and made up his mind to settle permanently. In one month he wrote for his wife and children. Mr. McClure, Elgie's old friend, assisted them in getting a house, and in placing their furniture in it. After their removal Mrs. Mellville's health began to improve.

The second year after their sojourn in Grove City Dr. Howard was smitten with atrophy. He requested Mrs. Howard to write for Mrs. Mellville. She immediately answered the summons, and was his constant nurse for three weeks. At times Mrs. Howard and Ardeela could do nothing with him, while Elgie seemed to have unbounded influence over him. Before she left her father Elgie forgave him for all the suffering he had caused her through life, and prayed that God would forgive him also. He was fast sinking away, and his days were numbered, a fact which he seemed to realize. Mrs. Mellville was preparing to return home for a few days, and before she left her father said:

"Elgie, you are a blessed child."

He called Mrs. Howard to the bed and said:

"Will you forgive me, Julia, for all my unkindness to you? Elgie has forgiven me."

With tears in her eyes Mrs. Howard said:

"Yes."

He then continued, and said it was his head and not his heart that was wrong, and he was sorry for all he had ever done. Mrs. Mellville was ready to start for Grove City, and bidding her father an affectionate farewell, she said she would see him again soon. Mrs. Howard wrote her that

her father prayed constantly, and finally said that he had found the Saviour; that he was willing to go to Him, and was only waiting for the summons of death.

Mrs. Mellville left Zalia with her mother, whom she was to send home in time for Elgie to see her father before he died. Zalia came in one forenoon and said:

"Ma, if you want to see grandpa alive you must catch the next train. They thought he was dying when I left."

Mrs. Mellville started and reached the train just as it started. When she arrived at home she found her father unconscious. At 12 o'clock he breathed his last and entered that unknown region whence no traveler returns. Mrs. Howard, Ardeela, and Elgie, as they gazed on his emaciated form, felt no pangs of revenge, as they had forgiven him for all he had ever done. Her mother told Elgie that she asked her father before he became unconscious if he would like to see Mr. Mellville and Elgie. He replied:

"No; hand me their pictures."

He took them both, and, kissing them, he said: "My dear children, farewell," then laid them down beside him and wept, and from that time he sank rapidly.

Wallace and family were sent for, and arrived in time for the funeral, Rev. Arnold conducting the services. In his remarks about Dr. Howard and his life, he said he felt that he was saved, and thought that he had attempted to work in the

vineyard all his life, though he gave no evidence until his last hours.

FATHER.

Father, are you sleeping, sleeping,
Where the night dew roams at will?
Do your friends around you weeping
Answer, "Night winds do be still?

Have you gained the port of heaven?
Is your spirit now at rest?
Have your sins, then, been forgiven?
Are you numbered with the blest?

Have you met our sister Mina?
Did she know you at the door?
Were you paid while in the vineyard
For the hour you worked? No more?

Though the moon and stars above you
Shine with radiance in the night;
Has your spirit met my mother's?
Are you each a shining light?

Elgie's on the pathway coming,
May she meet you all above,
Then the past will be forgiven,
Sins washed by a Savior's love.

After the funeral services were over, and the family returned to the house, the will was read. It was then quite evident that the doctor's mind was somewhat deranged, and the will was set aside, and the property divided equally among the heirs, Mrs. Howard retaining her third according to law. Elgie took her share and purchased a house and lot in Grove City; this assisted her husband and gave a home to her step-children. Some advised her to put it in the bank, and use the interest to pay traveling expenses, and let Mr Mellville rent as he had done before, until he was

able to buy a home for himself, but she did what she thought was right.

After a time Mr. Mellville and his wife united with the United Presbyterian Church, and she did her best to bring up the children in the paths of rectitude. She would always ask a blessing at the table, and kept up family worship in the absence of their father; but as the children grew up, outside influence caused her much trouble, though she did by them in many instances in a manner which an own parent would not have done.

After Dr. Howard's death Mrs. Howard and Ardeela visited in Onoco. Mrs. Howard concluded to extend her visit to Grove City, and spend a time with her daughter, Mrs. Mellville. After her mother came she said:

"Mother, do you feel as if the dark cloud is lifted since father's death?"

Her mother replied, "In a measure, I do, but so long as I live with Ardeela I shall have his image before me."

To this Mrs. Mellville replied, "Mother, you can reside with us, and I will do all in my power to make you happy."

Her mother said, "I can well believe it, my child, for I can only judge the future by the past. But it would not do for me to leave Ardeela alone, and you could not live with her."

After Mrs. Howard had finished her visit she returned to Oakville.

CHAPTER LXXI.

ARDEELA INSANE—MRS. HOWARD'S DEATH.

When Mrs. Howard entered her home she found Ardeela insane, and persons trying to cheat her out of her property. The cloud hung heavily over her. She selected a Mr. Vermiler as Ardeela's guardian, and he placed her in the asylum. Mrs. Howard then returned to Grove City to live with Elgie. The second year after Mrs. Howard became a member of the Mellville family Zalia was married to a man by the name of Renolds. Her stepmother gave her a good outfit of clothing, bedding, towels, and table linen; and when she went to housekeeping she had her brother go with her.

Ardeela left the asylum somewhat improved, and lived with Elgie nearly two years, which made it a terrible life for Mrs. Mellville. Wallace lost his property, and was completely broken up, and Mrs. Howard and Elgie assisted him to clothe his family. Base as Susan had been in her treatment of Elgie, she could not see them suffer. Her brother she did not call to account, for she knew that he was once a noble brother, but he had since been made a wreck by the one who had promised to make him a noble and true helpmate. Mrs. Mellville bestowed every possible kindness upon her mother. She was taken down at last, and for ten long weeks Elgie carried her mother in her arms day after day, and most of the night. Charles Marks had followed them to Grove City, and his wife was ever an attentive friend. Wallace

came to see his mother, and remained two days and nights. Mrs. Howard said:

"How hard it is to die and leave but one sane child out of three."

That one was Elgie. Mrs. Hogue, Mrs. Wilder, and Mrs. Hartly were friends, and there were many more of those who were members of the church and those who were not who were equally kind to Mrs. Mellville in her hour of affliction. She had no children to come and offer her a kindness. The past was forgotten. Elgie went to the bedside of her dying mother, who placed her hand upon her head and asked God to bless her darling child, and, looking up, she said:

"Don't cry, my child, I am going to heaven. Farewell!"

The spirit had taken its flight, and the imprints of the last farewell were forever sealed upon the lips now cold in death. While Mrs. Mellville stood transfixed to the spot, her insane sister sat and watched the lamp of life almost flicker out, and then left the room. All was now hushed; death in its stillness reigned supreme. The crushed affections, the bruised and broken heart which had struggled for its victory in the fierce battle of this life, was now at rest. That night Mrs. Mellville was found, by Mrs. Holly, lying with her head upon the breast of her dead mother, in an insensible condition. The day for the burial of Mrs. Howard arrived, and a few near friends of the deceased and the Mellvilles accompanied her remains to the depot. She was buried in Onoco beside her daughter Mina. It was a sad sight to

see poor insane Ardeela as she stood at the grave, and the four little grandchildren, with Mr. and Mrs. Mellville, taking a last sad look at the loved and lost mother. But the cloud had at last been removed. The sky was clear, and in peace she had gone to her Redeemer. They lingered to take one last look at the grave whose damp earth had begun to press heavily over the cherished form, far down into the darkness and silence of the grave. There must the loved one remain, never more to cheer the heart of her bereaved child in the hours of darkness which must come to her, by her gentle words of love and kindness. This was certainly a dark cloud under which Mrs. Mellvile was passing, and yet she thought every cloud has a silver lining, however dark the side presented to our view. Heavy though it be with sorrows and woes, which almost crush the life from our hearts as it presses upon us; yet there, hidden from our short mortal vision, gleams the soft silvery lining, ever shining, though perhaps never to be revealed in this world, but reserved for us to discover after we, too, have been called from this to our heavenly home, and look back upon our earthly pilgrimage with rejoicings that we have been so safely borne through the clouded sky of trials and temptations. Mrs. Mellville then composed the following lines:

MOTHER.

Mother, thou art laid in the cold earth to rest,
The rain falleth now on thy cold marble breast.
Have the angels then claimed thee and borne thee above?
And are you now watched by the spirit of love?
The cloud that did shadow thy pathway through life—
Has the angel removed it, and thy sky made more rife?

Then, mother, if in heaven thou hast found a home,
May thy spirit then wander on this earth, or roam
And watch o'er thy Elgie wherever she be,
Though the same cloud doth darken her path through the sea.
When her sad life is ended, and she leaves this cold shore,
Ask the Savior to claim her, as he did thee before.
May we cling to each other in that heaven above,
And Jesus watch o'er us with the spirit of love.

Ardeela remained with the children until the return of Wallace. He did not get the dispatch which was to apprise him of his mother's death. Susan was absent East looking after a fortune which had been bequeathed to her by an uncle. Ardeela then returned to Oakville, and her guardian again placed her within the walls of the asylum.

After Dr. Howard's death Norman Ballard renewed the correspondence with his old friend, Mrs. Julia Howard, and a few days previous to her death Mrs. Mellville received a letter informing them that Mr. Ballard had preceded her to the grave some two weeks. They had associated in youth, and in death they were not divided. Mrs. Howard promised her husband that she would be buried beside him, so Elgie, to fulfil her mother's promise, had her father's remains removed to Onoco and laid beside her mother. She had tombstones erected at the graves of her mother and Mina, with these beautiful inscriptions: "Our Mother," and "Rest till we come." Mrs. Howard had placed a tombstone at her husband's grave in her lifetime.

Wallace's daughter, Lula, came to visit at her aunt's. She was poorly clad, and begged her uncle and aunt to take her to reside with them.

They listened to her pitiful tale, and received her as one of their household. Elgie dressed her just as she had done Mr. Mellville's children, and gave her every advantage she could, but she sought the destruction of her aunt. She would make remarks to her aunt about the neighbors, and then tell the neighbors that her aunt made the remarks. Her mother, Susan Howard, assisted her by writing her letters, and Lula managed to get some of the neighbors to write to her parents in her favor, and against her Aunt Elgie. Not that they cared for Lula, but because they were angry with Mrs. Mellville through Lula's falsehoods, and did it for revenge. Mrs. Mellville was at last obliged to send her away. Her health, after her mother's death, had failed her, and the conduct of her own brother's child, whom she had so kindly befriended, preyed upon her mind. When Lula left her aunt's she went to a grandfather's on her mother's side. She carried the same traits of character with her to his home, which soon disgusted him, and she then went to her own people.

Ardeela's mind had again somewhat improved, when she once more returned and sought shelter under the roof of her sister Elgie. But she had only been there four weeks when she had to be returned to the asylum again, to remain the rest of her life. Elgie visited her but once afterward, and in the following lines the misery of the insane mind of Ardeela are vividly visible:

Stay, Elgie, stay; oh! do not go.
Do listen to Ardeela's tale—
How she had suffered days of woe
Before her mind began to fail.

How many times she then did say,
"My home will be the asylum wall,
My star of hope went out by day,
And now I tread these lonely halls.

"My feet are fettered with a chain;
The insane slave no more can roam.
Ardeela knows she's not to blame.
O! how she longs for her old home."

The matron bid poor Elgie go.
Then closed the door, and shut her in.
Then Elgie's heart did plainly show
How much her sufferings were within.

Then down the path she slowly went,
The gate swung slowly to and fro.
Her mind was plainly ever bent
On poor Ardeela's tale of woe.

No sister have I now to claim;
Her mind is wrecked, and she is wild,
And Elgie knows she's not to blame,
For hating her when but a child.

Ardeela, never fret or foam,
You soon will leave these lonely halls,
Be gathered to that glorious home,
Forever free from prison walls.

Mrs. Mellville often read her Bible, scarcely a day passing without her reading a chapter in that holy book. She read, "Gather them in from the highways and hedges," and so far as her limited means would permit, she obeyed that command. She picked up the fallen and gathered them under her roof; and while they often turned and stung her, she did not grow discouraged.

Those around her who she thought were her friends, sometimes forsook her in the hour of trouble and sickness, but that only made her cling more closely to her Savior. And while through life she may have done some things in the hour of

her trials and troubles which did not look just right to those who are inclined to make all things wrong, yet she felt and knew that she had never fallen. Though the slanderer's tongue had been dropping poison like hail, she could yet look up to her God and say, "I am innocent, and though all earthly friends forsake me, Jesus, I cling to Thee."

Mrs. Mellville concluded to visit the home of her childhood, but when she arrived at Grumble Hall, she found it in ashes, with nothing left to mark the spot, save one lone pillar. She thought as she gazed upon the desolate scene, "This home of my childhood days, with its lone pillar towering above the wreck-strewn ground, is indeed emblematical of myself—all alone.

With Mabel Cranelin for her companion, she visited the graves in Onoco. The myrtle was trailing its vines over the graves, and a beautiful rosebud hung negligently down over the words "Our Mother." These beautiful remembrances, and befitting tributes to the dead of Mrs. Mellville, had been placed there by the kind hand of Mabel.

Claren Howard settled in Grove City, on the same street with his cousin, Mrs. Mellville, and his mother died at his home. The same undertaker who cared for the remains of her sister-in-law, Mrs. Dr. Howard, took charge of her remains also; both were taken to the same depot; each had her last wish gratified. Mrs. Dr. Howard wished to die with her daughter Elgie, while her

sister-in-law wished to die with her son Claren, which is seemingly another strange coincidence.

The other two sons, Winchester and Julian, hold good positions in life. Claren is chief clerk of one of our principal railroads. Thus we see those who have not had the best advantages in life climbing the ladder of prosperity.

Mrs. Mellville will always love and honor Mr. Mellville for his kindness to her mother.

Drs. Wallingford, Duncan, and Rugal, and Ina Pollard have often visited Elgie in her home in the city, and when they meet they live over their youthful days together.

Dr. A. Mills, Mrs. Mellville's attending physician, gives her no promise of long life, or that she will ever be restored to health. She is only waiting for the messenger to remove the dark cloud, so that the sky will appear clear as it did for her mother. When spring time comes and the flowers are all in bloom, and after the spirit of Elgie Mellville has taken its flight. will some kind reader cast a thought on one who has truly suffered, but has gone to receive her reward—gone where the sweet star of faith has risen over her grief, where the clouds all bright and shining with hues from the heavenly skies are no longer dark and rayless; and where the spirit of her who endured such sufferings in life is doubly receiving the reward of her trust in Him who doeth all things well.

THE END.

THE LONE GRAVE IN THE WOODS.*

Upon the farm of Enoch Allison, in Grant district, formerly know as the Bartlet place, in a dense woods "where the sunlight scarce ever finds its way," is a lonely grave. Here rests the mortal remains of Judge Collens, who died many years ago. There may seem nothing strange in this, but in connection with this grave is a tradition which perhaps has never found its way into print. It was told the writer a few days since, and we give it as it came to us.

Judge Collens was a very prominent man in his day. He lived in Allen county, Pennsylvania, on the farm, we believe, where his remains now lie. He was eccentric in all his habits of life, and somewhat skeptical in his religious connections. Before the Judge died he made a will, one of the provisions of which was that he should be buried directly upon the State line that divides Pennsylvania from Virginia. This request was strictly carried out, and his body interred on the site he selected, with his head resting on Virginian soil and his face toward the rising sun, and his feet extending into the State of Pennsylvania. Instead of a single mound to mark his resting place, with nature's covering of green turf and wild flowers, a heavy vault of cut stone, almost as substantial as the Egyptian mausoleum of old, encloses the grave, the idea being to protect it from the ruthless hand of invaders of any kind, the medical college ghoul, perhaps, included. Here, all alone in the woods, beneath the broad, spreading branches of the forest trees, is located this curious tomb, which has been visited by people from all sections.

* Extract from The Virginia Independent, August 30th, 1882.

CLOUDY SKY.

A prominent Ohio gentleman has a good word to say for Mrs. Springer's new book. He received the first copy of the first edition of this work

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WOOSTER, OHIO, October 20th.

MRS. NARCISSA SPRINGER,

CLEVELAND, OHIO.

Madam:—Have received your book CLOUDY SKY, and am pleased to be able to state that you have in a highly entertaining manner, presented an array of interesting facts and portrayed human character in every day life in such pleasing style and ease of expression, as at once makes your work very inviting to the reader, and its moral tone is so manifest and praiseworthy as to commend it to the public as a household companion.

Though your book may be classed with novels, it is not such (to my certain knowledge of the main facts) except the names and characters, and is a truthful history of the events and incidents you have therein narrated, in the detailing of which you have been eminently successful. You may console yourself with the idea that you have done a good work. I trust you will meet with success in the sale of your book, and have no doubt that when its superior merits become known to the reading public, you will be amply rewarded for your labor.

Yours respectfully,

JOHN P. JEFFRIES.

AN INTERESTING LETTER RECEIVED FROM A CLEVELAND GENTLEMAN.

"Cloudy Sky, or the Unfortunate Children," is the title of a story recently published, the author of which is Mrs. Narcissa Smith Springer. So far as I am informed, this is the author's first ambitious contribution to literature, and as such it is to be commended as a more than ordinary successful effort. The reader is informed on the title page that it is "a true tale," and he or she will not have gone far in its perusal without becoming satisfied that such is the fact. The straightforward course of the story, told with the simplicity of a running narrative, clearly indicates that it is the plain unvarnished history of a life experience which had rather more of sharply defined incidents than falls to the average lot. The author has made no effort at embellishment, evidently relying upon the intrinsic interest of the story for its success, and doubtless the majority of judicious readers will approve her judgment. The story is crowded with characters, some for admiration, and others for detestation; but none unnatural or improbable—and there is no lack of interest, though of an humble sort, to actively maintain the interest of the reader. The dominating view of the story is one of sadness, and the appeal is to the sympathies; but our reader is not all the time in the gloom, and the rifts that come in the clouds let through the brightest of sunlight. The moral tone of the story is unexceptionable. I take pleasure in commending it to popular favor.

Cleveland, Oct. 18th, 1883. E. C. H.

Mrs. N. S. Springer received this notice from G. H. Carpenter, M.D.

CLEVELAND, Dec. 1st, 1883.

I have read with much pleasure "Cloudy Sky," written by Mrs. Narcissa S. Springer.

For *versatility* of *thought*, and *vividness* of *description*, Mrs. Springer has few equals. I bespeak for her "Book," so interesting in all its features, a wide and extensive circulation.

G. H. CARPENTER.

CLOUDY SKY.

MRS. SPRINGER: My acquaintance with and personal regard for its author place me in a position in which it is not easy to give an impartial judgment upon the merits of "Cloudy Sky." If a physician may not prescribe in his own family, a pastor should hardly be allowed to pass upon the literary productions of one in his flock. If it may be allowed, I take pleasure in commending your book for the directness of its style, the familiarity of its narrative, and the positiveness of its moral tone. The last is its special excellence. In a time when so many drift with the current of public and social life, it is refreshing to read a narrative which sets forth approvingly the conduct of those who are positive in their principles and strict in their religious life. That your book may be widely read, and may minister an uplift to the life of every reader, is the sincere wish of

Your Pastor,

JNO. M. FRENCH.

119 Arlington Street, Cleveland, O.

WORDS OF CHEER.

The following is a portion of a letter which was received by the well-known authoress of "Cloudy Sky," from Dr. F. A. Hudson, of Chicago, and will doubtless prove highly gratifying to the lady's many friends.

CHICAGO, Aug. 9th.

DEAR MADAM: As you have kindly taken the initiative, I hasten to reply. I have long been aware of the success of the "Cloudy Sky," chiefly, it is true, by the high encomiums passed upon it by members of the Chicago press, but partly by the manner in which it was lauded by the literary critic of one of the New York journals. I cannot remember which one it was, but I can recall some of what the writer said: "This work will compare favorably with Mrs. Stowe's 'Uncle Tom's Cabin', and for depth of pathos and vividness of description it stands to-day without a rival."

FRED A. HUDSON.

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Cloudy Sky

A Tale of Truth